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CHRISTMAS COOKIES™

89 Recipes to Bake Forever

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• Brownies • Slice & Bake
+
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2025
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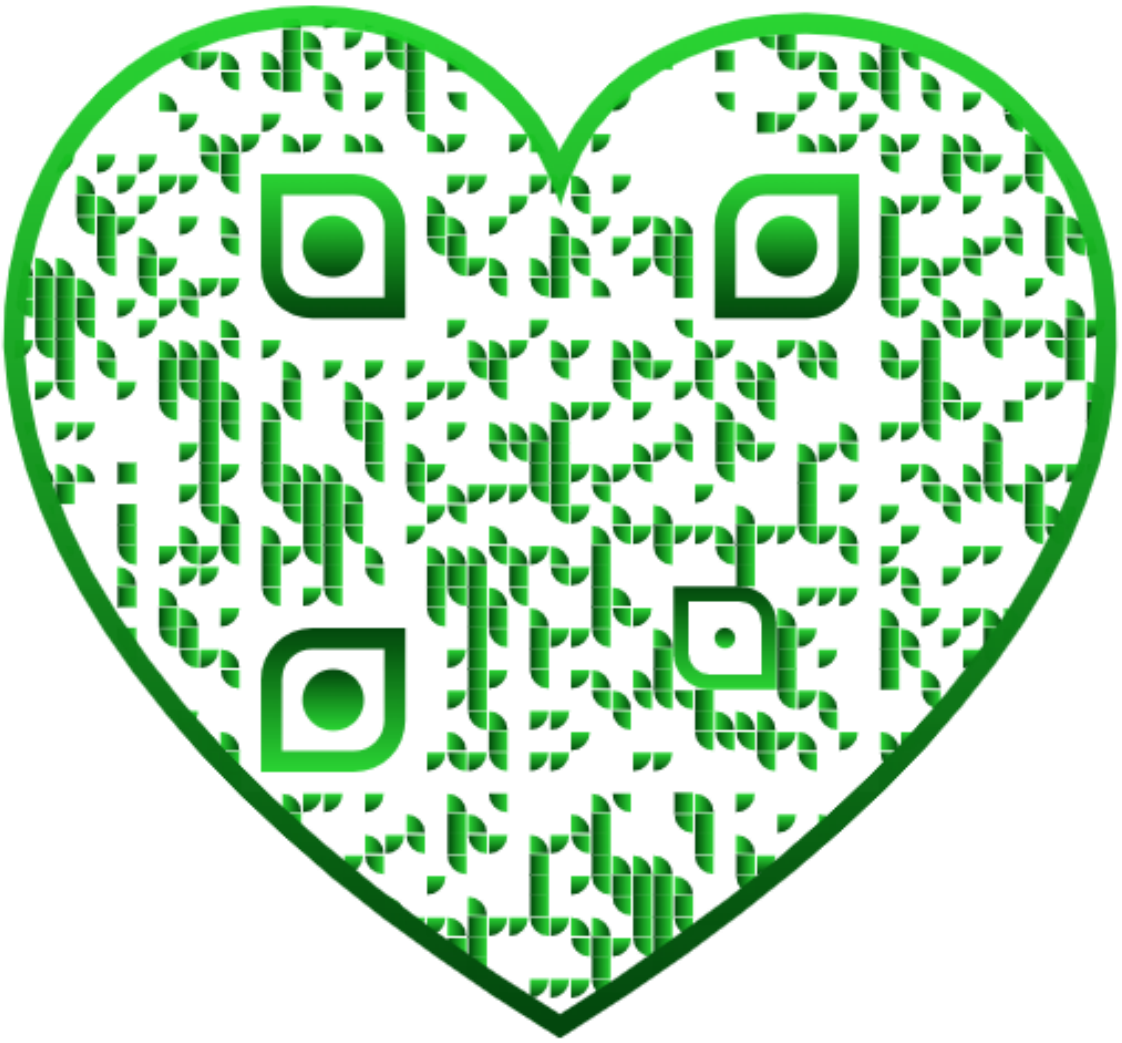

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ad COUNCIL

4 THE CLASSICS
14 ALL THE SUGAR
24 BARS AND BROWNIES
34 DROP THAT DOUGH
42 MAD FOR PLAID
46 COOKIE PASSPORT
54 VINTAGE FAVORITES
66 CUTOUTS
70 STUFFED AND FILLED
80 SHAPED SWEETS
90 SLICE AND BAKE
96 RECIPE INDEX

15

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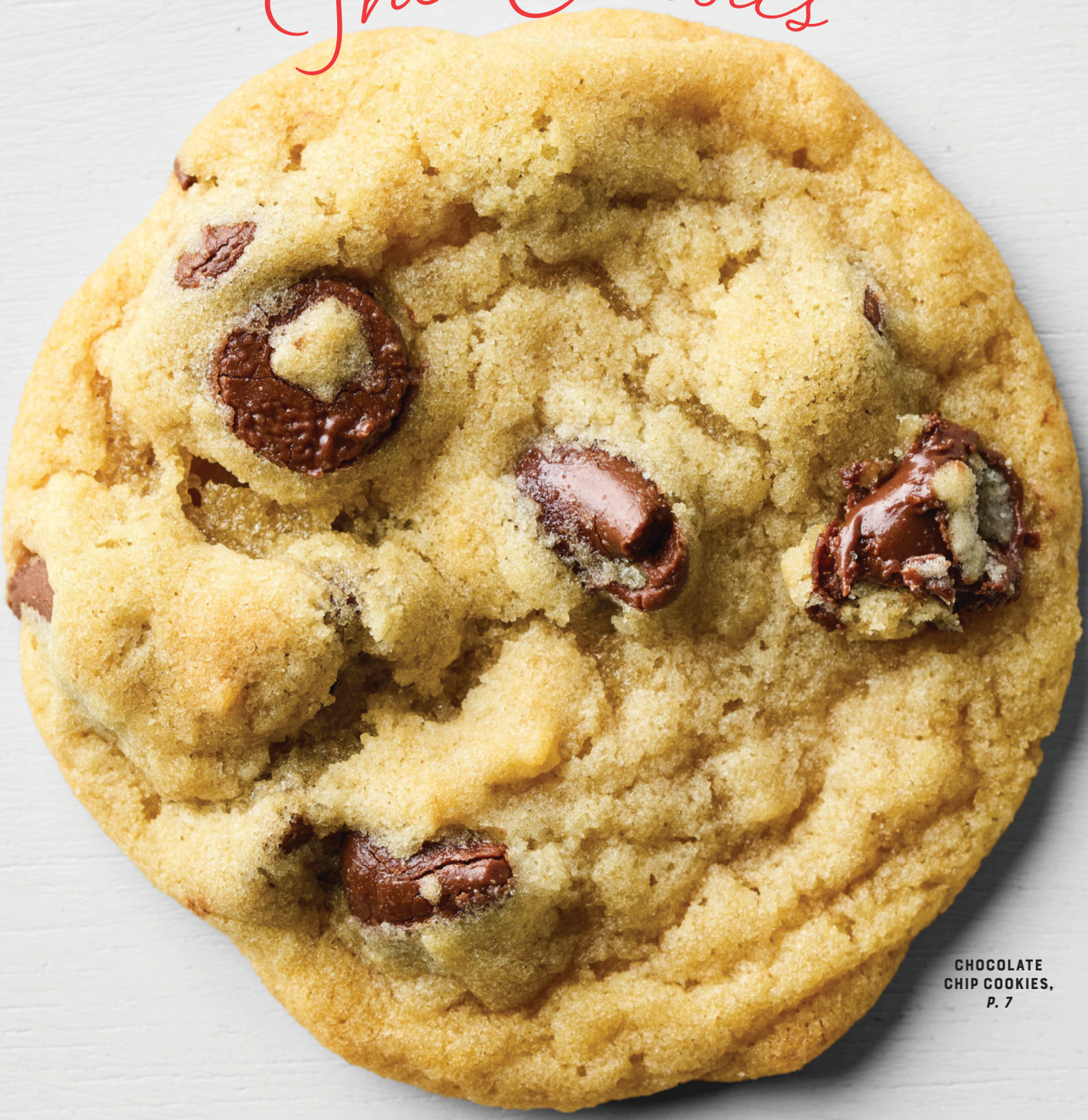
The Classics



CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES, *P. 7*

These cookies are the true classics for a reason. Make-and-bake simplicity won them top honors as after-school treats, but their nostalgic aura keeps them on the list for holidays and special occasions too.

PEANUT BUTTER
BLOSSOMS, *P. 7*

At Better Homes & Gardens,

WE'VE BEEN SHARING OUR BRAND'S OWN VERSIONS OF OATMEAL COOKIES SINCE OUR EARLY PUBLISHING DAYS. BUT WE CAN'T TAKE CREDIT FOR THE ADVENT OF THIS TREAT. WHILE NO ONE KNOWS ITS TRUE ORIGIN DEFINITIVELY, SOME SAY IT WAS INSPIRED BY SCOTTISH OATCAKES. THE FIRST PRINTING OF A SIMILAR RECIPE WAS IN FANNIE FARMER'S *BOSTON COOKING-SCHOOL COOK BOOK* FROM 1896.

OATMEAL COOKIES

HANDS ON 30 minutes **BAKE** 8 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **½ cup salted butter, softened**
- **½ cup shortening or salted butter, softened**
- **1½ cups packed brown sugar**
- **1 tsp. baking soda**
- **1 tsp. ground cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **2 eggs**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **3 cups regular or quick-cooking rolled oats**
- **1 cup stir-ins, such as raisins, chocolate-covered raisins, chopped toasted nuts, chocolate chips or any baking chips, mixed dried fruit bits, candy-coated milk chocolate pieces, or flaked coconut**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter and shortening with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add brown sugar, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Beat in flour. Stir in oats and desired stir-ins.

2. Drop dough by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 to 3 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until light brown and centers appear set, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 36 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *143 cal, 6 g fat (2 g sat fat), 17 mg chol, 95 mg sodium, 21 g carb, 1 g fiber, 12 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

A TRUE LEGEND

Is any cookie in American history as famous as *the* chocolate chip cookie? We think not. This time-honored treat was created in the late 1930s by Ruth Wakefield, owner of the Toll House Inn in Whitman, Massachusetts. She published her original recipe in the 1938 edition of her *Toll House Tried and True Recipes,* and it became a sensation during the societal upheavals of the Great Depression and World War II. Nestlè company later obtained the rights to the recipe and the Toll House name, and it still prints the cookie recipe on the back of its Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels package.

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

PICTURED ON *P. 4*
HANDS ON 30 minutes
BAKE 6 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening or salted butter, softened
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 12-oz. pkg. semisweet chocolate chips (2 cups)

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter and shortening with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add both sugars, baking soda, and salt. Beat on medium 2 minutes, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Beat in flour. Stir in chocolate chips.
2. Drop dough by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake just until edges are light brown, 6 to 8 minutes (cookies may not appear set). Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 48 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *125 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 13 mg chol, 83 mg sodium, 17 g carb, 1 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

PEANUT BUTTER BLOSSOMS

PICTURED ON *P. 5*
HANDS ON 25 minutes
BAKE 10 minutes per batch at 350°F

- ½ cup shortening
- ½ cup peanut butter
- ¾ cup granulated sugar, divided
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ⅛ tsp. baking soda
- 1 egg
- 2 Tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- Milk chocolate stars

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat shortening and peanut butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add ½ cup of the granulated sugar, the brown sugar, baking powder, and baking soda. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, milk, and vanilla. Beat in flour.
2. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll balls in the remaining ¼ cup granulated sugar. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are firm and bottoms are light brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Immediately press a chocolate star into each cookie's center. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 54 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *96 cal, 5 g fat (2 g sat fat), 5 mg chol, 27 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 0 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

Bakery-Style Chocolate Chip Cookies

Prepare as directed, except use 1 cup salted butter, omit shortening, and reduce flour to 2¼ cups. Omit semisweet chocolate chips and use 12 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped (2 cups). Preheat oven to 350°F. Drop by ¼-cup portions 3 inches apart on parchment paper-lined cookie sheets. Bake 7 minutes. Remove cookie sheet and firmly tap three times on the counter. Return to oven. Bake 2 minutes more. Repeat tapping. Bake until evenly golden brown, 2 minutes more. Remove and repeat tapping. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Makes 20 cookies.

COCONUT MACAROONS

HANDS ON 15 minutes
BAKE 20 minutes per batch at 325°F

- **2⅔ cups flaked coconut (7 oz.)**
- **⅔ cup sugar**
- **⅓ cup all-purpose flour**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **3 egg whites**
- **½ tsp. vanilla or ¼ tsp. almond extract**
- **1 recipe Chocolate Dip or Drizzle (optional)**

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a medium bowl combine coconut, sugar, flour, and salt. Stir in egg whites and vanilla.
2. Drop dough by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
3. If using drizzle, place melted chocolate mixture in a resealable plastic bag. Snip corner of bag. Pipe chocolate mixture across each cookie in a crisscross pattern. Or dip bottoms of each cookie in melted chocolate mixture, allowing excess to drip off. Place on a parchment paper-lined tray or cookie sheet. Let stand until set. **Makes 30 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *73 cal, 4 g fat (4 g sat fat), 0 mg chol, 57 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 1 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE DIP OR DRIZZLE

In a small bowl microwave 4 oz. semisweet chocolate chips and 1 tsp. shortening until melted, about 1 minute, stirring every 30 seconds.

These irresistible cookies are giant in size and huge in ginger flavor. Shown on the cover of the November 1998 issue of *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine, they prompted scores of calls from readers saying they were the best ginger cookies they'd ever had.

GIANT GINGER COOKIES

HANDS ON 40 minutes
BAKE 12 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **4½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **4 tsp. ground ginger**
- **2 tsp. baking soda**
- **1½ tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **1 tsp. ground cloves**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1½ cups shortening**
- **2 cups granulated sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **½ cup molasses**
- **¾ cup coarse sugar or granulated sugar**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a medium bowl stir together first six ingredients (through salt).
2. In a large bowl beat shortening with a mixer on low 30 seconds. Gradually add the 2 cups granulated sugar. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and molasses. Beat in flour mixture.
3. Shape dough into 2-inch (¼-cup) balls. Roll balls in the ¾ cup coarse sugar. Place 2½ to 3 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.
4. Bake until cookies are light brown and puffed, 12 to 14 minutes. (Do not overbake or cookies will not be chewy.) Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 25 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *302 cal, 13 g fat (3 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 133 mg sodium, 45 g carb, 1 g fiber, 27 g sugars, 3 g pro.*

PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

HANDS ON 35 minutes
BAKE 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- 1 cup peanut butter
- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat peanut butter, butter, and shortening with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugars, baking soda, and baking powder. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Beat in flour.
2. Shape dough into 1¼-inch balls. Roll balls in additional granulated sugar. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Flatten by making crisscross marks with the tines of a fork. Bake until edges are light brown, 7 to 9 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
Makes 75 cookies.
PER COOKIE *79 cal, 5 g fat (2 g sat fat), 8 mg chol, 50 mg sodium, 9 g carb, 0 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

THE FIRST KNOWN PEANUT BUTTER COOKIE RECIPE WAS PRINTED IN A BOOK BY GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER, AN AMERICAN SCIENTIST IN THE 1900S WHO ENCOURAGED PEANUTS AS A FARM CROP. HIS BOOK TOUTED 105 WAYS TO PREPARE PEANUTS!

SANDIES

HANDS ON 35 minutes **CHILL** 30 minutes **BAKE** 15 minutes per batch at 325°F

- **1 cup salted butter, softened**
- **½ cup powdered sugar**
- **1 Tbsp. water**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1½ cups finely chopped pecans, toasted (tip, *p. 92*)**
- **1 cup powdered sugar**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add the ½ cup powdered sugar. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in water and vanilla until combined. Beat in flour. Stir in pecans. Cover and chill until firm enough to shape, 30 to 60 minutes. **2.** Preheat oven to 325°F. Shape dough into 1-inch balls or 2x½-inch logs. Place 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake about 15 minutes or until bottoms are light brown. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Place the 1 cup powdered sugar in a large plastic bag. Add cooled cookies in batches to bag. Gently shake to coat. **Makes 55 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *80 cal, 6 g fat (2 g sat fat), 9 mg chol, 24 mg sodium, 7 g carb, 0 g fiber, 3 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE-COVERED SANDIES

Prepare as directed, except decrease the 1 cup powdered sugar to **¾** cup and stir in **¼** cup unsweetened cocoa powder. Shake cooled cookies in cocoa powder mixture.

SPRITZ

HANDS ON 25 minutes
BAKE 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **1½ cups salted butter, softened**
- **1 cup granulated sugar**
- **1 tsp. baking powder**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **¼ tsp. almond extract (optional)**
- **3½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **Colored sugar (optional)**
- **1 recipe Powdered Sugar Icing *(p. 23)* (optional)**

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar and baking powder. Beat until combined, scraping sides of bowl occasionally. Beat in egg, vanilla, and, if desired, almond extract until combined. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in any remaining flour.
2. Force unchilled dough through a cookie press onto an ungreased cookie sheet. If you like, sprinkle cookies with colored sugar. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until edges are firm but not brown. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. If you like, drizzle cookies with Powdered Sugar Icing. **Makes 84 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *58 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 11 mg chol, 27 mg sodium, 6 g carb, 0 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Generations OF KIDS HAVE ENTHUSIASTICALLY AWAITED THEIR CHANCE TO SQUEEZE DOUGH FROM THE COOKIE PRESS TO MAKE FUN SHAPED SPRITZ. THE BUTTERY COOKIES HAVE BEEN FAVORITES IN SCANDINAVIA AND NORTH AMERICA FOR CENTURIES. FOR COLORFUL VARIATIONS, TINT PORTIONS OF THE DOUGH WITH PASTE FOOD COLORING.

SHORTBREAD

HANDS ON 15 minutes
BAKE 25 minutes at 325°F

1¼ cups all-purpose flour
3 Tbsp. granulated sugar
½ cup salted butter

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. In a medium bowl combine flour and sugar. Use a pastry blender to cut in butter until mixture resembles fine crumbs and starts to cling. Form the mixture into a ball; knead until smooth.

2. To make shortbread wedges, on prepared cookie sheet pat or roll the dough into an 8-inch circle. Make a scalloped edge. Cut circle into 16 wedges. Leave wedges in the circle. Bake until bottom just starts to brown and center is set, 25 to 30 minutes. Cut circle into wedges again while warm. Cool on cookie sheet 5 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 16 wedges.**

PER WEDGE *96 cal, 6 g fat (4 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 41 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 0 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Butter-Pecan Shortbread

Prepare as directed, except substitute packed brown sugar for the granulated sugar. After cutting in butter, stir in 2 Tbsp. finely chopped pecans. Sprinkle mixture with ½ tsp. vanilla before kneading. Press a pecan half into each wedge before baking.

Chocolate-Orange Shortbread

Prepare as directed, except add 1½ tsp. orange zest with the butter. After cutting in butter, stir in ⅓ cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips.

Cherry-Pistachio Shortbread

Prepare as directed, except after cutting in butter, stir in 2 Tbsp. finely chopped dried tart red cherries and 2 Tbsp. finely chopped pistachio nuts. Drizzle cooled cookies with a mixture of 2 oz. melted white chocolate and 1 tsp. shortening. Sprinkle with additional chopped pistachios.

SHAPE SHIFT

To make shortbread cutouts, on a lightly floured surface roll or pat dough to ½-inch thickness. Use cookie cutters to cut out desired shapes. Place 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheet. Bake 20 to 25 minutes.

All the Sugar

Would it even be Christmas without sugar cookies? We think not. This comprehensive lineup of our best sugar cookies (yes, there are several!) will give you so many options to try. Plus, plenty of frostings and icings to make them pretty.

OLD-FASHIONED SUGAR COOKIES

HANDS ON 35 minutes
BAKE 12 minutes per batch at 300°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 3 egg yolks
- ½ tsp. vanilla
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour

1. Preheat oven to 300°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter and shortening with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking soda, cream of tartar, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg yolks and vanilla. Beat in flour.
2. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. If you like, roll balls in additional sugar. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until edges are set (do not let edges brown), 12 to 14 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 48 cookies**.
PER COOKIE *88 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 18 mg chol, 47 mg sodium, 12 g carb, 0 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

This COOKIE HAS BEEN A BEST-LOVED STAFF FAVORITE FOR DECADES. THE RECIPE CALLS FOR AN OLD-FASHIONED LEAVENING COMBO OF CREAM OF TARTAR (AN ACIDIC POWDER) AND BAKING SODA VERSUS JUST CALLING FOR BAKING POWDER.

PEEKABOO SUGAR
COOKIES, P. 22

CREAM CHEESE SUGAR COOKIES WITH CREAM CHEESE FROSTING, *p. 22*

SOUR CREAM SUGAR
COOKIES, *P. 22*

ALMOND SUGAR COOKIES WITH ROYAL ICING, *P. 22*

EASIER ROLLING Skip the chilling step and roll out sugar cookie dough (or any roll-out cookie dough) when it is soft and easy to work with. Shape the dough into a ball and flatten slightly. Place between two pieces of parchment or wax paper and roll to desired thickness. Place on a large cookie sheet and freeze until firm, about 30 minutes. When ready to bake, peel one piece of parchment paper from frozen cookie dough. Lay the parchment on a work surface, then flip the dough onto the parchment. Peel remaining parchment paper from frozen dough. Cut out dough and bake as directed.

Sugar Cookie Bars

Prepare Classic Sugar Cookie Cutouts dough as directed, except preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper, extending over edges. Pat dough evenly into prepared pan; smooth out top. Bake until edges are golden, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Lift uncut bars from pan using parchment. If you like, top with Buttercream Frosting *(p. 23)* and sprinkles. Cut into bars. Makes 36 bars.

Parchment Paper

WE RECOMMEND USING PARCHMENT PAPER, SUCH AS REYNOLDS KITCHENS PRECUT COOKIE BAKING PARCHMENT SHEETS, TO LINE YOUR PANS. THEY PREVENT STICKING AND MAKE FOR EASY REMOVAL EVERY TIME.

CLASSIC SUGAR COOKIE CUTOUTS

HANDS ON 40 minutes
CHILL 30 minutes
BAKE 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **1 cup salted butter, softened**
- **1¼ cups sugar**
- **1½ tsp. baking powder**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **2 eggs**
- **2 tsp. vanilla**
- **3 cups all-purpose flour**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until easy to handle, 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use 2½- to 4-inch cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until edges are firm and bottoms are light brown, about 7 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Decorate as desired. **Makes 52 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *80 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 17 mg chol, 67 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 0 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

COPYCAT CRUMBL SUGAR COOKIES

HANDS ON 30 minutes
BAKE 13 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **1⅓ cups salted butter, softened**
- **1 cup granulated sugar**
- **⅓ cup powdered sugar**
- **2½ tsp. baking powder**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **3 egg whites**
- **2 Tbsp. heavy cream**
- **1½ tsp. vanilla**
- **½ tsp. almond extract**
- **3⅔ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 recipe Buttercream Frosting *(p. 23)***

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next four ingredients (through salt). Beat on medium until fluffy, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg whites, heavy cream, vanilla, and almond extract. Beat in flour.
2. Drop dough by ½-cup portions 3 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Flatten mounds to ½-inch thickness (3½-inch diameter). Bake until edges are set (cookies will be pale), 13 to 14 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Spread ⅓ cup Buttercream Frosting on top of each cookie. **Makes 9 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *965 cal, 51 g fat (32 g sat fat), 136 mg chol, 807 mg sodium, 119 g carb, 1 g fiber, 79 g sugars, 7 g pro.*

PEEKABOO SUGAR COOKIES

PICTURED ON *P. 16*
HANDS ON 30 minutes
CHILL 2 hours
BAKE 7 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 3¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup apricot preserves or desired-flavor preserves or jam

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Gradually add powdered sugar, beating until combined. Beat in eggs, vanilla, and salt. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until easy to handle, 2 hours.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ⅛-inch thickness. Use floured 2½-inch cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps as needed. Use a floured 1-inch cutter to cut a hole from the center of half of the shapes. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until edges are firm and bottoms are light brown, 7 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. Spread a generous teaspoon of apricot preserves over each whole cookie. Sprinkle additional powdered sugar on cookies with center cutouts; place on top of whole cookies. **Makes 18 sandwiches.**
PER SANDWICH *258 cal, 11 g fat (7 g sat fat), 48 mg chol, 106 mg sodium, 37 g carb, 1 g fiber, 19 g sugars, 3 g pro.*

CREAM CHEESE SUGAR COOKIES

PICTURED ON *P. 17*
HANDS ON 25 minutes
CHILL 1 hour
BAKE 5 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened, or 4 oz. mascarpone cheese
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg or ⅛ tsp. ground nutmeg (optional)
- 1 egg
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour

1. In a large bowl beat butter and cream cheese with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and nutmeg (if using). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until easy to handle, 1 hour.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use floured 2½-inch cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps as needed. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until bottoms are light brown, 5 to 6 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Decorate as desired. **Makes 24 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *133 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 23 mg chol, 106 mg sodium, 19 g carb, 0 g fiber, 9 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

SOUR CREAM SUGAR COOKIES

PICTURED ON *P. 18*
HANDS ON 40 minutes
CHILL 1 hour
BAKE 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- Dash salt
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. lemon zest (optional)
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in sour cream, egg, vanilla, and lemon zest (if using). Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until easy to handle, 1 hour.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use floured 2½- to 4-inch cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps as needed. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until bottoms are light brown, 7 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool. Decorate as desired. **Makes 40 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *76 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 12 mg chol, 45 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 0 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

MOLD IT

If you like, instead of rolling out dough and using cookie cutters, dust 2½- to 3-inch cookie molds with flour. For each cookie, press a portion of dough into mold to shape. Remove. Bake as directed.

ALMOND SUGAR COOKIES

PICTURED ON *P. 19*
HANDS ON 45 minutes
CHILL 2 hours
BAKE 7 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- 1½ cups sugar
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ½ tsp. almond extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup ground blanched almonds

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs, milk, vanilla, and almond extract. Beat in flour and almonds. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until easy to handle, 2 hours.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use floured 2½- to 4-inch cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps as needed. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until bottoms are light brown, 7 to 9 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Decorate as desired. **Makes 54 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *87 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 16 mg chol, 56 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 0 g fiber, 6 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

DROP COOKIES

Prepare as directed, except shape 1½-Tbsp. portions of dough into balls. Place 2 inches apart on sheets. Bake until bottoms are light brown, 9 to 11 minutes.

Meringue Powder

IS A MIXTURE OF PASTEURIZED DRIED EGG WHITES, SUGAR, AND EDIBLE GUMS. IT IS THE SECRET INGREDIENT TO MAKING ROYAL ICING DRY QUICKLY WITH A SMOOTH, HARD FINISH. LOOK FOR IT IN THE CAKE-DECORATING AREA OF CRAFTS STORES.

ROYAL ICING

In a large bowl stir together 4 cups powdered sugar, 3 Tbsp. meringue powder, and ½ tsp. cream of tartar. Add ½ cup warm water and 1 tsp. vanilla. Beat with a mixer on low until combined. Beat on high until icing is very stiff, 7 to 10 minutes. If needed, beat in additional water to reach desired consistency for piping. (When not using icing, keep it covered with plastic wrap or a damp paper towel to prevent it from drying out.) Refrigerate any remaining icing in an airtight container up to 3 days. Stir before using. **Makes 3 cups.**

POWDERED SUGAR ICING

In a small bowl combine 1 cup powdered sugar, 1 Tbsp. milk, and ¼ tsp. vanilla. Stir in additional milk, 1 tsp. at a time, until icing is desired consistency. **Makes ½ cup.**

CHOCOLATE POWDERED SUGAR ICING

Prepare as directed, except stir in 2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder with the powdered sugar.

BUTTERCREAM FROSTING

In an extra-large bowl beat 1 cup softened butter with a mixer on medium until creamy, 1 to 2 minutes. Beat in 1 cup powdered sugar. Add 2 Tbsp. heavy cream, 1 tsp. clear vanilla, ½ tsp. almond extract (optional), and a dash of salt; beat on low until combined. Gradually beat in an additional 3 cups powdered sugar just until combined. Beat on medium, scraping bowl as needed, until fluffy, 5 minutes. Add an additional 1 Tbsp. cream; beat on high 1 minute more. **Makes 3½ cups.**

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

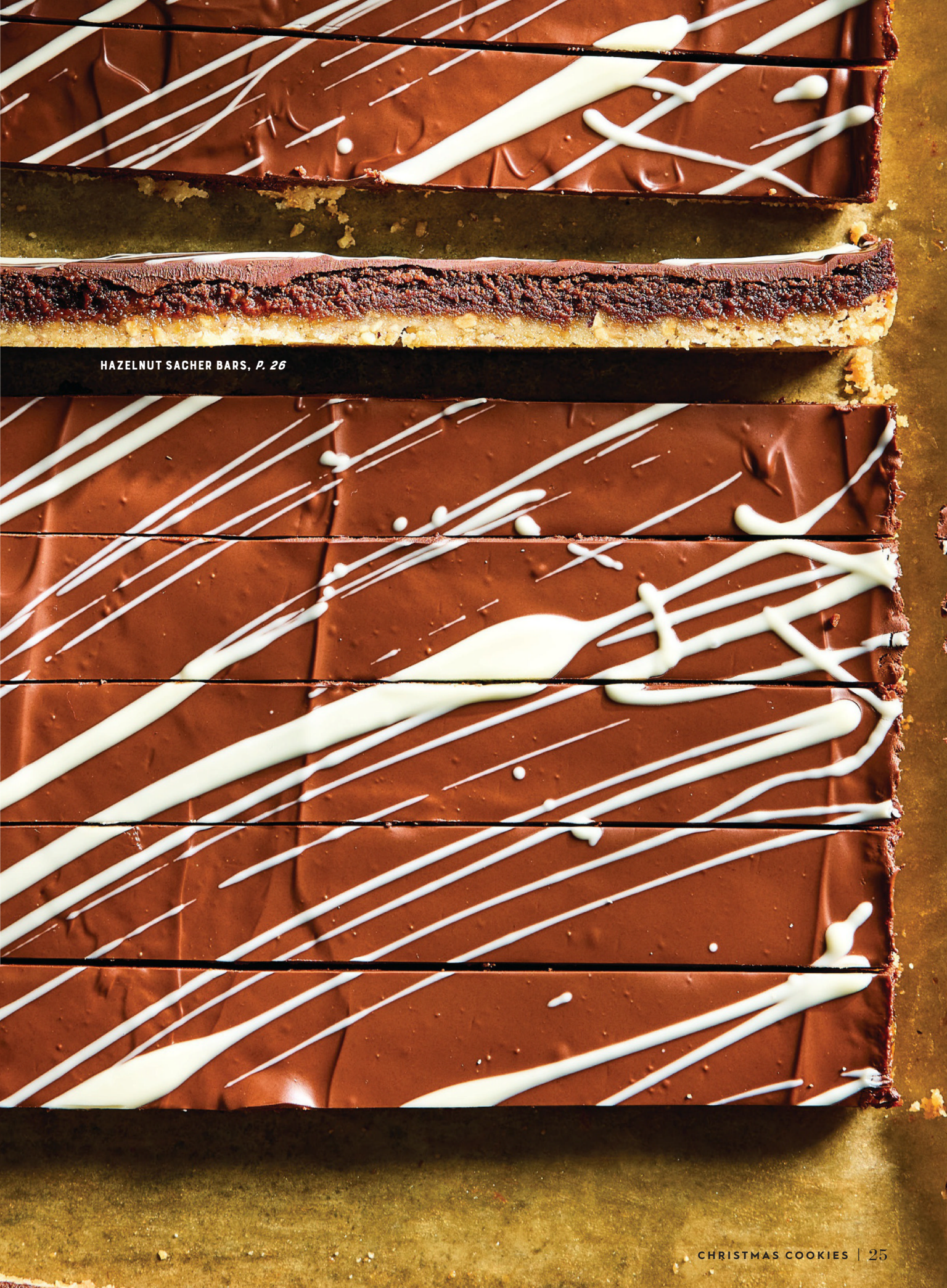
In a large bowl beat 8 oz. softened cream cheese, ½ cup softened butter, and 2 tsp. vanilla with a mixer on medium until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in 5½ to 6 cups powdered sugar to reach spreading consistency. Store frosting and frosted cookies in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to 3 days. **Makes 3½ cups.**

COCOA-CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Prepare as directed, except reduce powdered sugar to 5 to 5½ cups and beat in ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder.

Bars and Brownies

Layered, frosted, or drizzled, there's nothing square about these one-pan bars. It's easy to bake a big batch for a crowd with nostalgic flavors that guarantee an empty pan when the party's done.



HAZELNUT SACHER BARS, *P. 26*

HAZELNUT SACHER BARS

PICTURED ON *P. 25*
HANDS ON 30 minutes
BAKE 32 minutes at 350°F
CHILL 20 minutes **COOL** 10 minutes

- ¾ cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup salted butter, softened, divided
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- ½ cup toasted hazelnuts or almonds, finely ground
- ¾ cup apricot preserves
- 3 oz. unsweetened chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 6 oz. semisweet chocolate, melted
- 1 oz. white baking chocolate, melted (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with foil or parchment paper, extending over edges. Grease foil (if using).
2. For crust, in a small bowl beat powdered sugar and ½ cup of the butter with a mixer on low until smooth, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in ¾ cup of the flour and the ground nuts. Press mixture onto the bottom of the prepared baking pan. Bake 12 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack.
3. Place preserves in a blender. Cover and blend until smooth. Spread pureed preserves over crust. Chill 20 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, in a small bowl microwave the unsweetened chocolate and remaining ½ cup butter until melted and smooth, about 1 minute, stirring every 30 seconds. Cool 10 minutes.
5. In a medium bowl beat egg, egg yolk, granulated sugar, and salt on medium 5 minutes. Beat in melted unsweetened chocolate mixture and vanilla. Stir in remaining ½ cup flour. Carefully spread mixture over chilled preserves layer. Bake 20 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack.
6. Lift uncut bars from pan using foil or parchment. Spread with melted semisweet chocolate; let stand until chocolate is set. If you like, drizzle with melted white chocolate; let stand until white chocolate is set. Cut into bars.
Makes 48 bars.
PER BAR *122 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 18 mg chol, 45 mg sodium, 15 g carb, 1 g fiber, 11 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

BRANDIED FRUIT BARS

HANDS ON 15 minutes **STAND** 20 minutes
BAKE 1 hour at 350°F **COOL** 10 minutes

- ½ cup brandy or water
- 1⅓ cups dried fruit (such as golden raisins, raisins, dried cranberries, and/or chopped dried apricots)
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 1⅓ cups packed brown sugar, divided
- ½ cup salted butter, cut up
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ⅓ cup chopped pecans or walnuts
- Powdered sugar (optional)

1. In a medium saucepan heat brandy over low until just simmering. Remove from heat. Add dried fruit. Let stand 20 minutes; drain.
2. Meanwhile, for crust, preheat oven to 350°F. Line an 8x8-inch baking pan with foil or parchment paper, extending over edges. In a medium bowl stir together 1 cup of the flour and ⅓ cup of the brown sugar. Use a pastry blender to cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Press into prepared pan. Bake until golden, about 20 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl beat eggs with a mixer on low 4 minutes. Stir in remaining 1 cup brown sugar and ½ cup flour and vanilla just until combined. Add drained fruit and pecans; stir to combine. Pour fruit mixture over baked crust; spread evenly.
4. Bake until deep golden brown and a toothpick comes out clean, about 40 minutes (if necessary, cover loosely with foil the last 10 minutes to prevent overbrowning). Cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes.
5. Lift uncut bars from pan using foil or parchment. Cool completely in foil or parchment; carefully remove. Cut into bars. Dust with powdered sugar, if using. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. **Makes 16 bars.**
PER BAR *240 cal, 8 g fat (4 g sat fat), 39 mg chol, 63 mg sodium, 37 g carb, 1 g fiber, 26 g sugars, 3 g pro.*

BRANDIED FRUIT BARS

NANAIMO BARS

HANDS ON 20 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour

- **12 oz. graham crackers (about 22 rectangles)**
- **2 cups unsweetened flaked coconut**
- **1 cup chopped pecans**
- **2 cups salted butter, softened, divided**
- **⅔ cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **½ cup granulated sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **⅓ cup heavy cream**
- **¼ cup vanilla instant pudding and pie filling mix (1½ oz.)**
- **4 cups powdered sugar**
- **1 12-oz. pkg. semisweet chocolate chips**
- **2 tsp. shortening**

1. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with foil or parchment paper, extending over edges. In a food processor place graham crackers, coconut, and pecans; cover and pulse until fine crumbs form. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. In a small heavy saucepan heat 1 cup of the butter, the cocoa, and granulated sugar over medium until butter melts and mixture just comes to a simmer.
3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl lightly beat eggs. Gradually whisk about ½ cup of the hot butter mixture into the eggs. Whisk egg mixture into remaining butter mixture in saucepan. Cook, whisking constantly, until thick, about 30 seconds. Remove from heat. (Mixture may separate.)
4. Stir chocolate mixture into graham cracker mixture in bowl until combined. Press evenly and firmly into bottom of prepared pan with your fingers or the bottom of a measuring cup. Chill while preparing pudding layer.
5. In a large bowl beat remaining 1 cup butter, the heavy cream, and pudding mix with a mixer on medium until fluffy. Gradually beat in powdered sugar until smooth. Evenly spread over crumb layer in pan. Cover and chill 30 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl microwave chocolate chips and shortening until melted, 1 to 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Spread chocolate mixture evenly over pudding layer in pan. Chill until set, about 30 minutes.
7. Once chocolate is set, lift uncut bars from pan using foil or parchment. Transfer to a cutting board and cut into square or rectangle bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. If you like, just before serving, dust with additional powdered sugar. **Makes 32 bars.**

PER BAR *353 cal, 23 g fat (13 g sat fat), 45 mg chol, 189 mg sodium, 38 g carb, 2 g fiber, 28 g sugars, 3 g pro.*

This bar's NAMESAKE CITY IS LOCATED ON VANCOUVER ISLAND IN BRITISH COLUMBIA. A RECIPE FOR IT FIRST APPEARED IN THE 1952 WOMEN'S AUXILIARY TO THE NANAIMO HOSPITAL COOKBOOK, UNDER THE NAME "CHOCOLATE SQUARE." NOT LONG AFTER, A SIMILAR RECIPE WAS PRINTED IN THE *VANCOUVER SUN* NEWSPAPER UNDER THE TITLE "LONDON FOG BAR," WITH "NANAIMO BARS" LISTED AS A SECOND NAME. THE TRIPLE-LAYER BARS ARE RENOWNED AROUND THE WORLD.

THESE BARS WERE A FEATURE RECIPE IN THE 1969 "WHITE CHRISTMAS" PARTY STORY IN *BETTER HOMES & GARDENS* MAGAZINE, URGING READERS TO "DECORATE THE LIVING ROOM ALL IN WHITE, FROM THE CARPET TO THE TIP OF THE WHITE-FLOCKED CHRISTMAS TREE."

LEMON BARS

HANDS ON 20 minutes **BAKE** 45 minutes at 350°F

2¼ cups all-purpose flour, divided
½ cup powdered sugar
1 cup salted butter, softened
2 lemons
4 eggs, lightly beaten
1½ cups granulated sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with foil or parchment paper, extending over edges. For crust, in a large bowl stir together 2 cups of the flour and the powdered sugar; add butter. Beat with a mixer on low to medium just until mixture begins to cling together. Press into prepared baking pan. Bake until light brown, about 25 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, remove 1 Tbsp. zest and ⅓ cup juice from lemons. In a medium bowl whisk together eggs, granulated sugar, and lemon juice. Whisk in remaining ¼ cup flour and the lemon zest. Pour over hot crust.
3. Bake until edges begin to brown and center is set, about 20 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Lift uncut bars from pan using foil or parchment. Cut into bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. If you like, sift with additional powdered sugar to serve. **Makes 24 bars.**
PER BAR *182 cal, 9 g fat (5 g sat fat), 51 mg chol, 80 mg sodium, 24 g carb, 0 g fiber, 15 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

LEMON-ORANGE BARS

Prepare as directed, except reduce lemon juice to 3 Tbsp. and lemon zest to 1 tsp., and add 3 Tbsp. orange juice and 1 tsp. orange zest.

Test Kitchen home economist Kay Springer nurtured and perfected this Oatmeal Jam Bars recipe back in the 1960s for *Successful Farming* magazine, and it's still one of our all-time favorites. Considering all the cookies we've tasted and tested over the years, that is high praise indeed.

OATMEAL JAM BARS

HANDS ON 15 minutes
BAKE 35 minutes at 350°F

- **1⅓ cups all-purpose flour**
- **¾ cup quick-cooking rolled oats**
- **⅔ cup packed brown sugar**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. baking soda**
- **6 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- **¼ cup salted butter, softened**
- **¾ cup desired-flavor seedless jam**
- **1 tsp. fresh lemon juice**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9x9-inch baking pan with foil or parchment paper, extending over edges. In a medium bowl stir together first five ingredients (through baking soda).
2. In a large bowl beat cream cheese and butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add flour mixture; beat on low until mixture is crumbly and there are no more visible pieces of cream cheese mixture, about 1 minute. Remove 1 cup of the crumb mixture for topping.
3. Press the remaining crumb mixture into the bottom of the prepared baking pan. Bake until edges are browned and top is lightly golden, 20 minutes.
4. In a small bowl combine jam and lemon juice. Carefully spread jam mixture over hot crust. Sprinkle with the reserved 1 cup crumb mixture. Bake until top is golden, about 15 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Lift uncut bars from pan using foil or parchment. Cut into bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. **Makes 16 bars.**
PER BAR *186 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 18 mg chol, 151 mg sodium, 30 g carb, 1 g fiber, 18 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

Oatmeal Chocolate Bars

Prepare as directed, except omit jam and lemon juice. For chocolate filling, in a small saucepan combine ½ cup semisweet chocolate chips, ½ cup sweetened condensed milk, and 1 Tbsp. salted butter. Cook, stirring often, over low until chocolate melts and mixture is smooth, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in ½ tsp. vanilla and, if you like, ¼ cup chopped toasted nuts. Spread chocolate mixture over baked crust and continue as directed.

CHOCOLATE-BUTTERMILK BROWNIES

HANDS ON 25 minutes **BAKE** 25 minutes at 350°F **COOL** 1 hour

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 cups sugar**
- **1 tsp. baking soda**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 cup salted butter**
- **1 cup water**
- **⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **2 eggs**
- **½ cup buttermilk**
- **1½ tsp. vanilla**
- **1 recipe Chocolate-Buttermilk Frosting**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 15x10-inch baking pan. In a medium bowl stir together flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt.

2. In a medium saucepan combine butter, the water, and cocoa powder. Bring just to boiling, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Add cocoa mixture to flour mixture; beat with a mixer on medium until thoroughly combined. Add eggs, buttermilk, and vanilla. Beat 1 minute (batter will be thin). Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake until a toothpick comes out clean, about 25 minutes.

4. Pour warm Chocolate-Buttermilk Frosting over brownies, spreading evenly. Cool in pan on wire rack 1 hour. If you like, sift with additional cocoa powder. Cut into bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. **Makes 24 bars.**

PER BAR *245 cal, 10 g fat (6 g sat fat), 43 mg chol, 158 mg sodium, 37 g carb, 1 g fiber, 28 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE-BUTTERMILK FROSTING

In a medium saucepan combine ¼ cup salted butter, 3 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder, and 3 Tbsp. buttermilk. Bring to boiling. Remove from heat. Add 2¼ cups powdered sugar and ½ tsp. vanilla. Beat until smooth.

THE RICH CHOCOLATE FLAVOR OF THESE CAKELIKE BROWNIES DEFINITELY QUALIFIES THEM AS TIMELESS CLASSICS. PLUS, THEY'RE PRACTICALLY FOOLPROOF—A QUALITY APPRECIATED BY GENERATIONS OF COOKS.

SCANDINAVIAN ALMOND BARS

HANDS ON 20 minutes **BAKE** 12 minutes per batch at 325°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- ½ tsp. almond extract
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- Milk
- ½ cup sliced almonds
- 1 recipe Almond Icing

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and almond extract. Beat in flour.

2. Divide dough into four equal portions. On a lightly floured surface roll each portion into a 12-inch log. Place two logs 4 to 5 inches apart on each prepared cookie sheet. Flatten each log to 3 inches wide. Brush tops with milk. Sprinkle with almonds and, if you like, additional sugar.

3. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 12 to 15 minutes. While still warm, cut diagonally into 1-inch slices. Transfer to wire racks; cool completely. Drizzle with Almond Icing. Let stand until set. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. **Makes 48 bars.**

PER BAR *68 cal, 3 g fat (1 g sat fat), 9 mg chol, 49 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 0 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

ALMOND ICING

In a small bowl whisk together 1 cup powdered sugar, ¼ tsp. almond extract, and enough milk (3 to 4 tsp.) to make an icing of drizzling consistency.

Some best-loved holiday sweets come from the personal recipe collections of Better Homes & Gardens food editors, like these slices that were handed down from an editor's Norwegian grandmother.

SEVEN-LAYER BARS

HANDS ON 20 minutes
BAKE 25 minutes at 350°F

- ½ cup salted butter
- 2 cups finely crushed graham crackers (about 14 rectangles)
- 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup white baking pieces or chopped white chocolate
- 1 cup mixed dried fruit bits or dried cranberries, chopped
- 1⅓ cups sweetened flaked or shredded coconut
- 1 cup toasted sliced almonds

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with foil or parchment paper, extending over edges. Place butter in prepared pan; place in oven until butter is melted, about 5 minutes. Tilt pan to coat bottom evenly. Sprinkle with crushed graham crackers.

2. Drizzle graham cracker layer evenly with sweetened condensed milk. Sprinkle with chocolate chips, white baking pieces, dried fruit, coconut, and almonds. Press down firmly with the back of a spoon.

3. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 25 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Lift uncut bars from pan using foil or parchment. Cut into bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. **Makes 30 bars.**

PER BAR *228 cal, 14 g fat (8 g sat fat), 14 mg chol, 90 mg sodium, 26 g carb, 2 g fiber, 19 g sugars, 3 g pro.*

Drop that Dough

Drop cookies are perhaps the easiest cookies to make. Scoop out a dough portion, drop it on your pan, and bake to perfection. You can experiment with different sizes (itty-bitty minis or big-ol' giants), but adjust the baking time and keep a close eye on them in the oven.

Triple Chocolate Cookies, p. 36

Not every recipe is destined to become a classic (like 1973's Healthful Fudge with carob and sunflower seeds, for example). But this rich-and-fudgy recipe has been a favorite for generations, and will be for more to come.

TRIPLE CHOCOLATE COOKIES

PICTURED ON *P. 35*
HANDS ON 40 minutes
COOL 10 minutes **STAND** 20 minutes
BAKE 9 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **7 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped**
- **5 oz. unsweetened chocolate, chopped**
- **½ cup salted butter**
- **⅓ cup all-purpose flour**
- **¼ tsp. baking powder**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 cup granulated sugar**
- **¾ cup packed brown sugar**
- **4 eggs**
- **¼ cup finely chopped toasted pecans**
- **1 recipe Chocolate Drizzle**

1. In a medium bowl combine chopped chocolates and butter. Microwave until melted, about 1½ to 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Let cool 10 minutes. In a small bowl stir together flour, baking powder, and salt.
2. In a large bowl combine sugars and eggs. Beat with a mixer on medium to high until color lightens slightly, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in melted chocolate mixture, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in flour mixture. Stir in pecans. Cover surface of dough with plastic wrap. Let stand 20 minutes (dough will thicken as it stands).
3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Drop dough by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake just until tops are set, about 9 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Spoon Chocolate Drizzle over cookies. **Makes 60 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *92 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 18 mg chol, 19 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 1 g fiber, 9 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE DRIZZLE

Microwave 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips and 4 tsp. shortening until melted, 1 minute, stirring every 30 seconds.

FROSTED MAPLE DROPS

WHITE CHOCOLATE-RASPBERRY COOKIES

FROSTED MAPLE DROPS

HANDS ON 30 minutes
BAKE 9 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 1 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 recipe Maple Frosting

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add brown sugar, baking soda, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in maple syrup, egg, and vanilla. Beat in flour.
2. Drop dough by 1½-Tbsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until tops are set, 9 to 11 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool completely. Frost with Maple Frosting. **Makes 40 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *185 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 22 mg chol, 96 mg sodium, 30 g carb, 0 g fiber, 19 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

MAPLE FROSTING In large bowl beat ⅓ cup softened salted butter and ¼ cup pure maple syrup with a mixer on low until combined. Beat in 3 Tbsp. heavy cream, 1 tsp. vanilla, and a pinch of salt until combined. Beat in 2⅔ cups powdered sugar until spreadable.

WHITE CHOCOLATE-RASPBERRY COOKIES

HANDS ON 40 minutes **BAKE** 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- 11 oz. white baking chocolate, chopped, divided
- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 2¾ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup seedless raspberry jam
- ½ tsp. shortening

1. In a small bowl microwave 4 oz. of the white chocolate until melted, about 1 minute, stirring every 30 seconds. Set aside to cool.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking soda, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and the melted white chocolate. Beat in flour. Stir in 4 oz. of the chopped white chocolate. Drop by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until cookies are lightly browned around the edges, 7 to 9 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. About 1 hour before serving, in a small bowl microwave jam, stirring once, until melted, about 30 seconds. Spoon about ½ tsp. of the jam onto the top of each cookie. In another small bowl microwave the remaining 3 oz. white chocolate and the shortening until melted, about 45 seconds, stirring every 30 seconds. Drizzle melted white chocolate mixture over cookies. If needed, chill cookies until set, about 15 minutes. **Makes 48 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *109 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 13 mg chol, 64 mg sodium, 16 g carb, 0 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Baking Powder vs. Baking Soda

Leavening agents like baking powder and baking soda give cookies lift and puff, but they can't be used interchangeably. Baking powder contains bicarbonate and a weak acid to start the reaction. Baking soda is straight bicarbonate and requires the addition of an acid of another ingredient in the recipe (like buttermilk or brown sugar) to activate it. To make your own baking powder, for each 1 tsp. needed, combine ½ tsp. cream of tartar (a weak acidic powder) and ¼ tsp. baking soda.

COWBOY RANGER COOKIES

HANDS ON 15 minutes **COOK** 15 minutes **BAKE** 12 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 1 cup salted butter
- 1½ cups packed brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla
- 1 12-oz. pkg. semisweet or dark chocolate chips
- 1¾ cups regular rolled oats
- ¾ cup sweetened flaked coconut
- ½ cup coarsely chopped pecans
- Flaky sea salt (optional)

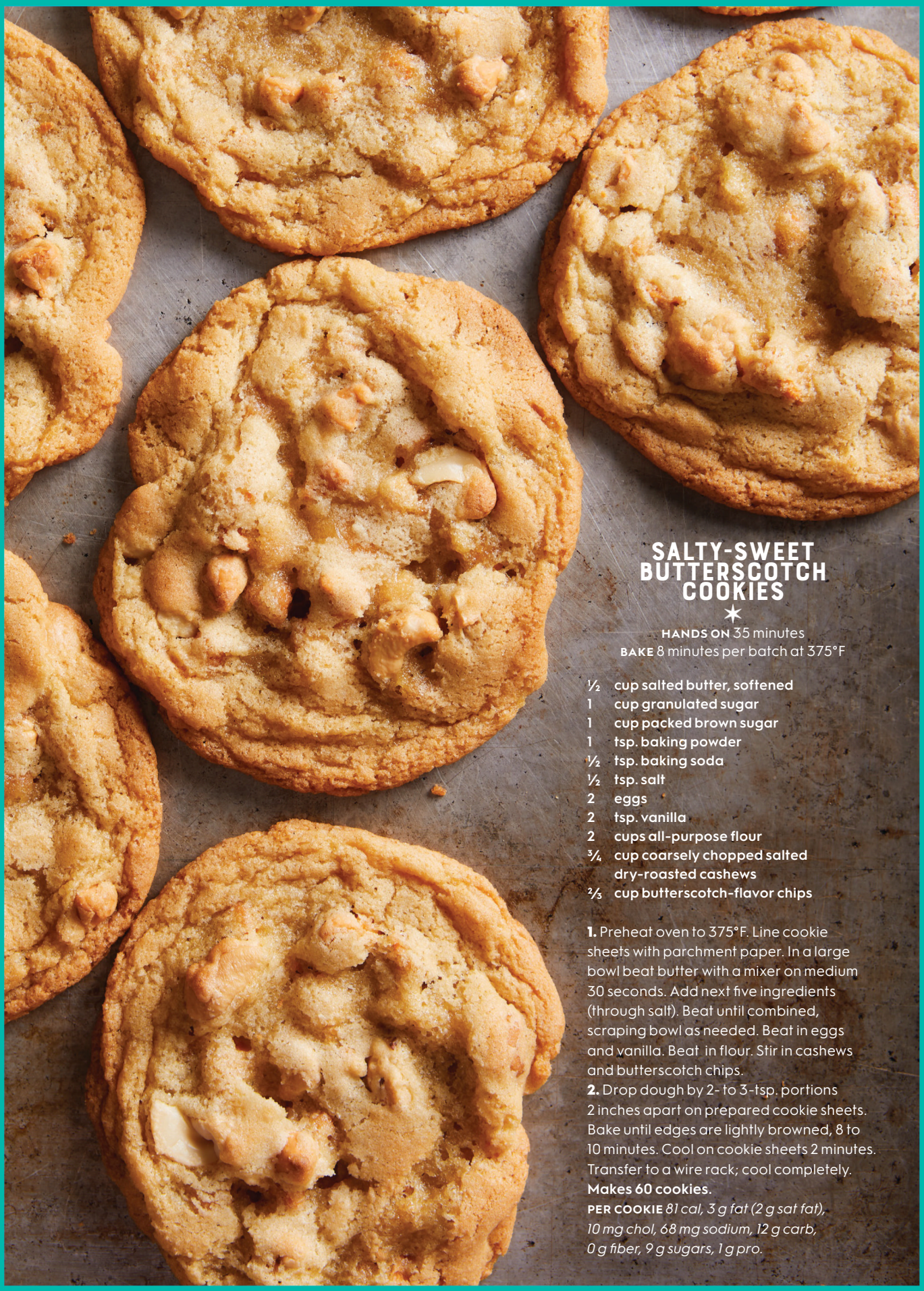
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a bowl combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt.

2. In a 10-inch skillet heat butter over medium-low 15 to 17 minutes or until butter turns light brown and smells nutty (watch it closely near the end so it doesn't burn). Transfer browned butter to a large bowl.

3. Whisk both sugars into browned butter. Whisk in eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture. Stir in chocolate chips, oats, coconut, and pecans.

4. Drop dough by 3-Tbsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are set and lightly browned, 12 minutes. If you like, sprinkle with flaky sea salt. Cool on cookie sheets 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 28 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *262 cal, 13 g fat (7 g sat fat), 32 mg chol, 141 mg sodium, 33 g carb, 2 g fiber, 20 g sugars, 3 g pro.*



SALTY-SWEET BUTTERSCOTCH COOKIES

HANDS ON 35 minutes
BAKE 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup coarsely chopped salted dry-roasted cashews
- ⅔ cup butterscotch-flavor chips

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next five ingredients (through salt). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Beat in flour. Stir in cashews and butterscotch chips.

2. Drop dough by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.

Makes 60 cookies.

PER COOKIE *81 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 10 mg chol, 68 mg sodium, 12 g carb, 0 g fiber, 9 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Regional chefs proudly share their recipes with our sister magazine, *Midwest Living,* where this recipe was originally featured years ago. These Pumpkin-Pecan Cookies, served at an inn in Ohio, came from the chef's Russian grandmother.

PUMPKIN-PECAN COOKIES

HANDS ON 35 minutes
BAKE 10 minutes per batch at 375°F

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. ground allspice
- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1 cup chopped toasted pecans
- 1 recipe Brown Sugar Frosting

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a medium bowl stir together first five ingredients (through allspice). In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and pumpkin. Beat in flour mixture. Stir in pecans.
2. Drop dough by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until bottoms are lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Spread cookies with Brown Sugar Frosting. **Makes 55 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *108 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 16 mg chol, 62 mg sodium, 13 g carb, 0 g fiber, 9 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

BROWN SUGAR FROSTING
In a medium saucepan cook and stir 6 Tbsp. salted butter and ⅓ cup packed brown sugar over medium until butter is melted and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat. Stir in 2 cups powdered sugar and 1 tsp. vanilla. Stir in enough hot water (2 to 3 tsp.) to reach spreading consistency. Immediately spread frosting over cooled cookies. If frosting becomes grainy, add a few more drops of hot water and stir until smooth.

LEMON DROP COOKIES

HANDS ON 15 minutes **BAKE** 10 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 4 tsp. lemon zest
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- ½ cup sour cream
- ⅓ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 recipe Lemon Glaze
- Finely crushed lemon drop candies (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next five ingredients (through salt). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, sour cream, and lemon juice. Beat in flour.
2. Drop dough by 1½-Tbsp. portions 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until tops are firm, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Brush tops of warm cookies with Lemon Glaze. If you like, sprinkle with crushed lemon drop candies. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. **Makes 26 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *109 cal, 5 g fat (3 g sat fat), 19 mg chol, 77 mg sodium, 16 g carb, 0 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

LEMON GLAZE In a small bowl stir together ¼ cup granulated sugar and 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice.

Better Homes & Gardens **magazine editors called Lemon Drop Cookies "a holiday party cookie with a glistening top" when the recipe took honors in the Prize Tested Recipes contest in December 1952. Since then, we've added a simple lemony glaze to give sparkle to the dainty treat.**

Mad for Plaid

The Better Homes & Gardens brand has been rocking plaid since 1930 (see *p. 44*). These four treats pay homage to our favorite pattern.

CHOCOLATE WATERCOLOR SHORTBREAD, *P. 44*
Turn your iced cookies into a canvas with edible paint brushed in sharp lines.

PLAID SUGAR COOKIE CUTOUTS, *P. 44*
Piece together colored dough for a patchwork masterpiece.

RED VELVET CHEESECAKE BARS, ***P. 45***
Ruby red cheesecake is the brilliant background for white chocolate crosshatch drizzle.

RED PLAID COOKIES, ***P. 45***
These slice-and-bake beauties require a few steps— shaping, slicing, and stacking—but the results are striking.

PLAID SUGAR COOKIE CUTOUTS

PLAID SUGAR COOKIE CUTOUTS

HANDS ON 25 minutes **CHILL** 2 hours
BAKE 6 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **1½ cups butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **¼ tsp. baking powder**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **1 tsp. almond extract (optional)**
- **¾ tsp. salt**
- **3½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **Gel food coloring**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar and baking powder. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, vanilla, and almond extract (if using) until combined. Beat in salt and flour.
2. Divide dough into three or four portions. Tint dough portions various shades of pink and/or red, leaving one portion of dough plain. Wrap dough pieces separately; chill until easy to handle, about 2 hours.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Working with one portion at a time, roll out dough on a lightly floured surface to ⅛- to ¼-inch thickness. Cut dough into strips of different widths. Layer strips of different colors and widths on your floured work surface; lightly roll over the dough with a rolling pin to seal strips together. Layer additional strips of dough perpendicular to other strips to create a plaid pattern; lightly roll over dough to seal. Using a 2- to 3-inch cookie cutter, cut out dough.
4. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake until edges are firm but not brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes about 48 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *102 cal, 6 g fat (4 g sat fat), 19 mg chol, 86 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE WATERCOLOR SHORTBREAD

HANDS ON 25 minutes **CHILL** 30 minutes
BAKE 18 minutes per batch at 325°F

- **2½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **⅔ cup sugar**
- **½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **1¼ cups butter, softened slightly**
- **1 recipe Royal Icing *(p. 23)***
- **Gel food coloring**
- **Vodka or water**

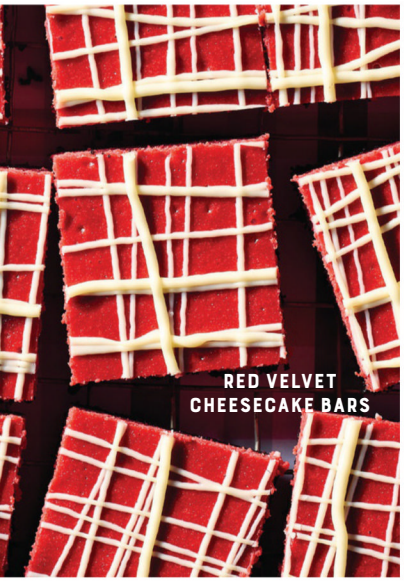
1. In a large bowl stir together flour, sugar, cocoa powder, and salt. Using a pastry blender or fork, cut in butter until mixture resembles fine crumbs and starts to cling. Form mixture into a ball; knead until smooth, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. On a lightly floured surface roll dough to ¼- to ½-inch thickness. Use a 2- to 2½- inch round cookie cutter to cut out dough.
3. Place cutouts 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Chill 30 minutes before baking so cookies retain their shape. Preheat oven to 325°F.
4. Bake until firm in centers and edges are set, 18 to 20 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
5. Spread tops of cooled cookies with Royal Icing. Let stand until dry, 4 to 12 hours.
6. Mix gel food coloring with a few drops of vodka to slightly dilute the food coloring. Use clean paintbrushes to paint plaid pattern on dried Royal Icing. Let stand until dry, about 1 hour. **Makes 20 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *292 cal, 15 g fat (9 g sat fat), 38 mg chol, 178 mg sodium, 40 g carb, 1 g fiber, 26 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

THE RED PLAID COOKBOOK

Since it was first published in 1930, all 17 editions of the *Better Homes & Gardens New Cook Book* have featured a red-and-white plaid cover. It was a natural fit to create sweets featuring the pattern that's such an integral part of our history.

COOKIE SWAP

Instead of wafer cookies, you can use 2 cups finely crushed chocolate sandwich cookies with white filling. Omit the 2 Tbsp. sugar, and decrease the butter to ¼ cup.



RED VELVET CHEESECAKE BARS

CHOCOLATE WATERCOLOR SHORTBREAD

RED VELVET CHEESECAKE BARS

HANDS ON 25 minutes
BAKE 25 minutes per batch at 350°F
CHILL 4 hours

- **Nonstick cooking spray**
- **1⅓ cups milk chocolate chips**
- **2 cups finely crushed chocolate wafer cookies (about 38 cookies) (tip, *above left*)**
- **⅓ cup plus 2 Tbsp. sugar, divided**
- **6 Tbsp. butter, melted**
- **2 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened**
- **½ cup sour cream**
- **4 tsp. red liquid food coloring**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **4 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **Melted white chocolate (optional)**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with foil, extending over edges. Lightly coat foil with cooking spray. In a bowl microwave chocolate until melted, stirring every 20 seconds. Let cool.
2. For crust, in a medium bowl combine crushed cookies and 2 Tbsp. of the sugar; stir in butter. Press crumb mixture firmly into bottom of prepared pan.
3. In a large bowl beat cream cheese, sour cream, food coloring, vanilla, and the remaining ⅓ cup sugar with a mixer on medium until smooth. Beat in melted milk chocolate. Stir in eggs. Spread over crust.
4. Bake until edges are puffed and center is set, about 25 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cover; chill at least 4 hours before serving. Lift uncut bars from pan using foil. If you like, drizzle with melted white chocolate in a crosshatch design. Cut into bars. **Makes 32 bars.**

PER BAR *171 cal, 12 g fat (7 g sat fat), 49 mg chol, 124 mg sodium, 13 g carb, 0 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 3 g pro.*

RED PLAID COOKIES

HANDS ON 45 minutes **CHILL** 3 hours
BAKE 8 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **1 cup butter, softened**
- **1½ cups sugar**
- **1½ tsp. baking powder**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **2½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **Red paste food coloring**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined. Beat in flour.
2. Divide dough in half. Knead food coloring into one portion of dough. Leave the remaining dough portion plain.
3. Shape each portion of dough into a rectangular 6x2-inch log. Wrap each log in plastic wrap or waxed paper; chill until dough is very firm, at least 2 hours.
4. Use a sharp knife to cut each log lengthwise into four slices. (You'll have four 6x2-inch pieces from each color of dough.) Stack four dough slices together, alternating colors, so you have two rectangular logs, each with four layers. Press dough together to seal layers. Wrap each log; chill until firm, about 30 minutes.
5. Cut each layered log lengthwise into four slices. (Each slice will have four layers in alternating colors.) Stack four dough slices together, alternating colors, to create a plaid effect. Trim edges to straighten, as needed. Wrap each log; chill until firm, about 30 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut logs crosswise into ¼-inch slices. Place slices 1 inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets.
7. Bake until edges are firm and bottoms are lightly browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 48 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *84 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 14 mg chol, 75 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 0 g fiber, 6 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

RED PLAID COOKIES

COOKIE PASSPORT

From all around the globe, cookies have worked their way into the cultural fabric of society, a beloved (and delicious) gift to share and celebrate. These are just a few continent-hopping sweets that have appeared in our publications over the years.

PAN LEBKUCHEN, *P. 51*

BIZCOCHITO STARS

HANDS ON 40 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour **BAKE** 35 minutes per batch at 275°F

- 1 **vanilla bean, split lengthwise**
- ½ **cup granulated sugar**
- 1 **tsp. anise seeds**
- 1 **tsp. lemon zest**
- 1 **cup salted butter, softened**
- 1 **Tbsp. fresh lemon juice**
- ⅛ **tsp. salt**
- 2⅓ **cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 **recipe Cinnamon Sugar and/or Lemon Glaze (optional)**

1. Scrape seeds from vanilla bean with the tip of a small sharp knife; discard pod. In a food processor combine vanilla seeds, granulated sugar, anise seeds, and lemon zest; cover and pulse until combined.

2. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Beat in sugar mixture, lemon juice, and salt, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, 1 hour.

3. Preheat oven to 275°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ½-inch thickness. Use 2- to 2½-inch star cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps as needed (if necessary, chill scraps before rerolling). Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.

4. If using, sprinkle with Cinnamon Sugar. Bake until edges are firm to the touch, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. If using, spoon Lemon Glaze evenly over cookies. Let stand until glaze is set. **Makes 18 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *231 cal, 10 g fat (7 g sat fat), 27 mg chol, 90 mg sodium, 33 g carb, 1 g fiber, 20 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

CINNAMON SUGAR

In a small bowl stir together 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar and ½ tsp. ground cinnamon.

LEMON GLAZE

In a medium bowl stir together 2 cups powdered sugar, 2 Tbsp. milk, 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice, and ¼ tsp. salt until smooth.

NEW MEXICO LAYS CLAIM TO THE CREATION OF BIZCOCHITOS—DELIGHTFUL BUTTER COOKIE CUTOUTS WITH A GENEROUS SPRINKLE OF CINNAMON SUGAR ON TOP. WHILE THIS TREAT DATES BACK TO THE MID-1800S, IT WASN'T UNTIL 1989 THAT NEW MEXICO MADE THE BIZCOCHITO ITS OFFICIAL STATE COOKIE.

These SMALL TRIANGULAR POUCHES ARE A TRADEMARK TREAT FOR THE ASHKENAZI JEWISH HOLIDAY OF PURIM. POPPY SEED FILLING IS MOST OFTEN USED, BUT YOU CAN MIX IT UP BY USING APRICOT OR RASPBERRY CAKE AND PASTRY FILLING AS WELL.

HAMANTASCHEN

HANDS ON 45 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour
BAKE 10 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **½ cup salted butter, softened**
- **½ cup sugar**
- **2 tsp. baking powder**
- **⅛ tsp. salt**
- **2 eggs**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **1 tsp. lemon zest**
- **1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice**
- **1 Tbsp. milk**
- **2¾ cups all-purpose flour**
- **½ cup poppy seed cake and pastry filling (tip, *above*)**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in next five ingredients (through milk; mixture may look slightly curdled). Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, 1 to 1½ hours.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ⅛-inch thickness. Use a 2½-inch round or fluted round cookie cutter to cut out circles, rerolling scraps as needed. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. For each cookie, brush edge of dough circle with water. Spoon about ½ tsp. pastry filling onto center. Fold dough edges together in three places to form a triangular hat shape, leaving filling open in center.
4. Bake until bottoms are lightly golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 40 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *79 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 55 mg sodium, 12 g carb, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

CHERRY KUCHEN BARS

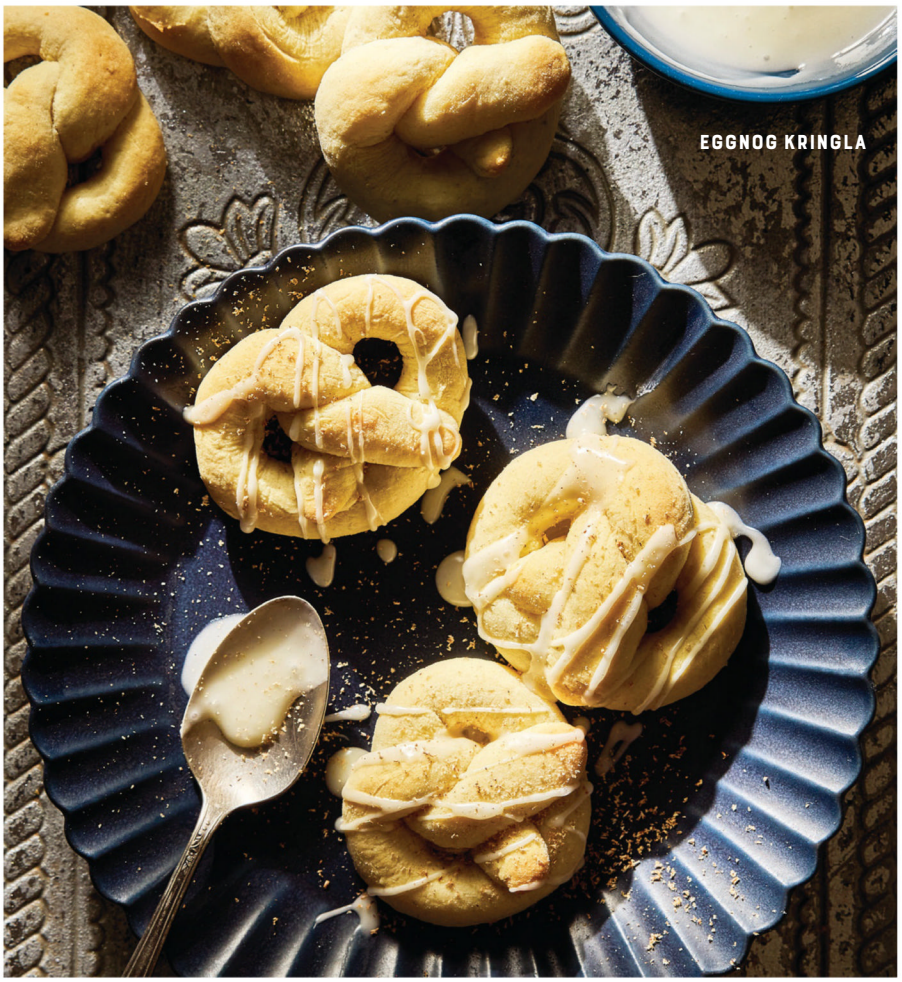
HANDS ON 25 minutes
BAKE 42 minutes at 350°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- 1¾ cups granulated sugar
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 21-oz. can cherry pie filling
- ½ cup Powdered Sugar Icing *(p. 23)*

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl beat butter and shortening with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar, baking powder, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Beat in flour. Reserve 1½ cups of the dough. Press remaining dough into the bottom of an ungreased 15x10-inch baking pan.
2. Bake 12 minutes. Spread pie filling over crust in pan. Spoon reserved dough in small mounds over pie filling.
3. Bake until top is light brown, about 30 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Drizzle with Powdered Sugar Icing. Cool completely. Cut into bars.
Makes 32 bars.
PER BAR *189 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 27 mg chol, 84 mg sodium, 31 g carb, 0 g fiber, 17 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

TRADITIONAL GERMAN KUCHEN IS A LUSCIOUS CROSS BETWEEN CAKE AND PIE WITH ITS TENDER BASE AND FRUIT OR CUSTARDY FILLING. THIS BIG-BATCH VERSION MAKES ENOUGH KUCHEN FOR A PARTY. ANY PIE FILLING FLAVOR WILL WORK HERE, SO MIX IT UP.

CHERRY KUCHEN BARS


EGGNOG KRINGLA

EGGNOG KRINGLA

HANDS ON 45 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour **BAKE** 5 minutes per batch at 425°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. ground cardamom (optional)
- 1 egg
- ½ tsp. vanilla
- ½ tsp. rum extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup dairy eggnog
- 1 recipe Eggnog Icing

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next six ingredients (through cardamom). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, vanilla, and rum extract. Add flour and eggnog alternately, beating after each addition until combined. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, 1 to 2 hours.
2. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a well-floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to a 10x5-inch rectangle. Cut each rectangle crosswise into twenty 5x½-inch strips. Roll each strip into a 10-inch rope. Shape rope into a loop, crossing rope over itself 1½ inches from ends. Twist rope at crossing point and lift ends across to opposite edge of loop. Place shaped dough 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until tops are very light brown, 5 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Drizzle cookies with Eggnog Icing. If you like, sprinkle with additional nutmeg. **Makes 40 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *104 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 77 mg sodium, 18 g carb, 0 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

EGGNOG ICING

In a small bowl stir together 2 cups powdered sugar, ¼ cup dairy eggnog, and ¼ tsp. rum extract until smooth. Stir in additional eggnog, ½ tsp. at a time, to make drizzling consistency.

German LEBKUCHEN ARE SIMILAR TO GINGERBREAD COOKIES WITH THE ADDITIONS OF MOLASSES AND SPICES. THIS VERSION IS THE SAME FORMULA, BUT BAKED AS BARS FOR QUICK PREP AND EASY TOTING.

PAN LEBKUCHEN

PICTURED ON *P. 47*
HANDS ON 30 minutes
BAKE 15 minutes at 350°F

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp. pumpkin pie spice
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 egg
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- ½ cup packed dark brown sugar
- ⅓ cup honey
- ⅓ cup dark molasses (not blackstrap)
- ½ cup chopped almonds
- ½ cup mixed dried fruits or candied orange peels, finely chopped
- 1 recipe Orange Glaze
- Candied orange peels (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 15x10-inch baking pan with foil, extending over edges. Lightly coat foil with cooking spray. In a medium bowl stir together flour, pumpkin pie spice, and baking soda.
2. In a large bowl beat egg and oil with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add brown sugar and beat until slightly thickened and increased in volume, 1 to 2 minutes. Beat in honey and molasses on low until combined, about 30 seconds. Beat in flour mixture. Stir in almonds and chopped fruits.
3. Spread batter in prepared pan. Bake until top appears dry and a toothpick comes out clean, 15 to 20 minutes.
4. Immediately score into 24 bars with a sharp knife. Brush on Orange Glaze. If you like, decorate with candied orange peels. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Lift uncut bars from pan using foil. Cut into bars. **Makes 24 bars.**
PER BAR *154 cal, 3 g fat (0 sat fat), 8 mg chol, 33 mg sodium, 31 g carb, 1 g fiber, 21 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

ORANGE GLAZE

In a small bowl stir together 1½ cups powdered sugar, 1 Tbsp. light-color corn syrup, ½ tsp. orange zest, and enough milk (about 2 Tbsp.) to make glaze consistency.

FILLED WITH SPICES, THESE FIRM COOKIES ARE SHAPED WITH MOLDS TO CREATE PATTERNED TOPS. THEY COME FROM BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS BUT ARE LOVED ACROSS EUROPE.

SPECULAAS

HANDS ON 45 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour **BAKE** 8 minutes per batch at 350°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ¾ cup packed brown sugar
- ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 Tbsp. milk
- 1⅓ cups all-purpose flour
- 3 Tbsp. finely chopped blanched almonds (optional)

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next six ingredients (through salt). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg yolk and milk. Beat in flour. Stir in almonds (if using). Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, about 1 hour.

2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Lightly flour a cookie mold, shaking out excess. Firmly press a small amount of dough into the prepared cookie mold. Unmold dough onto a prepared cookie sheet. If cookie does not unmold easily, tap the mold on the counter to release the dough. (Or, on a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ⅛-inch thickness. Use desired cookie cutters to cut out shapes.) Place dough shapes 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.

3. Bake until edges are golden, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 48 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *44 cal, 2 g fat (1 g sat fat), 9 mg chol, 28 mg sodium, 3 g sugars, 0 g fiber, 6 g carb, 0 g pro.*

Also KNOWN AS MELOMAKARONA, GREEK HONEY-WALNUT COOKIES ARE OFTEN MADE WITH OLIVE OIL AND MOLDED INTO MORE OF AN EGG SHAPE. THIS DUPE CALLS FOR BUTTER AND THE COOKIES BEING SHAPED INTO BALLS, BUT THE HONEY, SPICES, AND HINT OF ORANGE BRING HOME THE FESTIVE FLAVORS OF TRADITIONAL MELOMAKARONA.

GREEK HONEY-WALNUT BALLS

HANDS ON 35 minutes
BAKE 18 minutes per batch at 350°F

- ⅓ cup honey
- ¾ cup sugar, divided
- ½ tsp. orange zest (set aside)
- ½ cup fresh orange juice, divided (2 large oranges)
- 2 inches stick cinnamon
- 1 cup ground walnuts
- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- 2 Tbsp. brandy or milk
- ¾ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- Finely chopped toasted walnuts (tip, *p. 92*) (optional)

1. In a small saucepan combine honey, ¼ cup of the sugar, ¼ cup of the orange juice, and the stick cinnamon. Bring to boiling over high, stirring frequently; reduce heat. Simmer gently, stirring frequently, 5 minutes. Discard stick cinnamon. Transfer ¼ cup of the syrup to a medium bowl. Stir in ground walnuts and orange zest.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add the remaining ½ cup sugar, remaining ¼ cup orange juice, and the next six ingredients (through nutmeg). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in flour on low until a dough forms, about 1 minute.
3. Shape dough into 1¼-inch (1-Tbsp.) balls. Using your finger, press an indent in center of each dough ball. Place a rounded ½ tsp. ground nut mixture in each indent. Bring dough up and around mixture, enclosing it completely. Place balls , seam sides down, 1½ to 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. With a knife, score an X in the top of each ball. Bake until set, 18 to 20 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute.
4. Meanwhile, warm remaining syrup on low (do not boil). Brush tops of hot cookies with warm syrup. If you like, sprinkle with chopped walnuts. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 36 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *133 cal, 7 g fat (3 g sat fat), 14 mg chol, 60 mg sodium, 16 g carb, 1 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

VINTAGE FAVORITES

When it comes to cookies, Grandma really did know best. Pulled from our archives, these old-fashioned goodies were as loved back then as they will be right now.

The texture of these wafers is at their very best the same day they are baked or the next day when they are at peak crispness.

SESAME WAFERS

★

HANDS ON 40 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour
BAKE 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **1 cup salted butter, softened**
- **⅔ cup sugar**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **1¾ cups all-purpose flour**
- **½ cup sesame seeds**
- **½ cup ground pecans or almonds**
- **Melted chocolate (optional)**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar and vanilla; beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in flour. Stir in sesame seeds and pecans, working in by hand, if needed. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, about 1 hour.
2. Let dough stand at room temperature until slightly softened, if needed, 15 to 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ⅛-inch thickness, pressing together any cracks in dough. Use 2-inch cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps as needed. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 7 to 8 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 5 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. If using, dip half of each cookie into melted chocolate (or drizzle chocolate over tops of cookies). If you like, sprinkle with additional sesame seeds. Let cookies stand on a wire rack set over waxed paper until chocolate is set, about 10 minutes. **Makes 46 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *81 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 11 mg chol, 33 mg sodium, 7 g carb, 0 g fiber, 3 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

In 1970, *Better Homes & Gardens* editors must have liked the way shreds of coconut resembled Santa's whiskers. This cookie took first place in the fancy holiday cookies content in the year's December issue.

SANTA'S WHISKERS

HANDS ON 30 minutes
CHILL 2 hours **BAKE** 10 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **1 cup salted butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **2 Tbsp. milk**
- **1 tsp. vanilla or ½ tsp. rum extract**
- **2½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **¾ cup finely chopped red and/or green candied cherries**
- **½ cup finely chopped pecans**
- **¾ cup sweetened flaked coconut, divided**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar; beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in milk and vanilla. Beat in flour. Stir in cherries and pecans.
2. Divide dough into thirds. Shape each portion into a 7-inch log. Roll each log in ¼ cup of the coconut to coat. Wrap and chill until logs are firm enough to slice, 2 to 24 hours.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Use a sharp knife to cut rolls into ¼-inch slices. Place slices 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
Makes 72 cookies.
PER COOKIE *65 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 7 mg chol, 25 mg sodium, 8 g carb, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

HERMITS

HANDS ON 25 minutes **BAKE** 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **¾ cup salted butter, softened**
- **¾ cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **½ tsp. baking soda**
- **¼ tsp. ground nutmeg**
- **¼ tsp. ground cloves**
- **1 egg**
- **¼ cup strong brewed coffee, cooled**
- **1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 cups chopped pitted dates or raisins**
- **1 cup chopped toasted nuts, such as pecans, walnuts, almonds, or mixed nuts**
- **¾ cup powdered sugar (optional)**
- **2 Tbsp. half-and-half or milk (optional)**

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next five ingredients (through cloves). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and coffee. Beat in flour. Stir in dates and nuts.

2. Drop dough by 1-Tbsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. For glaze, if using, whisk together powdered sugar and half-and-half to create a thin brushable glaze. If needed, whisk in additional half-and-half, ¼ tsp. at a time, to reach desired consistency.

3. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 8 to 10 minutes. If using, immediately brush cookies lightly with glaze. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 48 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *87 cal, 5 g fat (2 g sat fat), 12 mg chol, 39 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 1 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

When our magazine arrived in readers' homes for the first time in 1922, it was called *Fruit, Garden and Home,* a publication devoted to home and family. The name was changed in 1924 to more accurately reflect its mission: *Better Homes & Gardens.*

THESE SPICY BITE-SIZE COOKIES HAVE BEEN A HOLIDAY FAVORITE OF GERMAN BAKERS FOR CENTURIES.

PFEFFERNUESSE

HANDS ON 45 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour **BAKE** 10 minutes per batch at 350°F

- ⅓ **cup molasses**
- ¼ **cup salted butter**
- 2 **cups all-purpose flour**
- ¼ **cup packed brown sugar**
- ¾ **tsp. ground cinnamon**
- ½ **tsp. baking soda**
- ¼ **tsp. ground cardamom**
- ¼ **tsp. ground allspice**
- ⅛ **tsp. black pepper**
- 1 **egg, lightly beaten**
- **Powdered sugar (optional)**

1. In a small saucepan combine molasses and butter. Cook and stir over low until butter melts. Pour into a large bowl; cool to room temperature. In a medium bowl stir together next seven ingredients (through pepper).

2. Stir egg into molasses mixture. Stir in flour mixture until combined, kneading in flour mixture, if needed. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, 1 to 2 hours.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Divide each dough half into three portions. On a lightly floured surface roll each portion into a 10-inch rope (¾ inch thick). Cut ropes crosswise into ½-inch pieces. Place pieces ½ inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.

4. Bake until edges are firm and bottoms are light brown, about 10 minutes. If you like, in a large bowl toss warm cookies in powdered sugar to coat. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 60 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *32 cal, 1 g fat (1 g sat fat), 5 mg chol, 19 mg sodium, 5 g carb, 0 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

THE MARGARINE WAR

Margarine, originally called oleomargarine or oleo, was a white-colored fat created as a cheaper option to butter for military use. To make it look more like butter, manufacturers dyed the product yellow. Eventually it was viewed as a threat to the butter industry, and in 1902, yellow-dyed margarine was restricted in many states because it looked too much like butter.

To circumvent the argument, margarine manufacturers sold little yellow food coloring capsules with oleomargarine that home cooks could knead into the product to give it the butter color. Most color bans on margarine were removed after World War II, and President Harry Truman later signed the Margarine Act of 1950 to end a federal margarine tax system.

Today, most home bakers have come full circle, choosing dairy butter for baking because of its superior flavor.

FIG COOKIES,
P. 65

"Whoever heard of a regular home without a cookie jar? 'Twould be a drab situation indeed!"

—Food writer Alice M. Child, *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine, February 1932

FflorentineS

HANDS ON 20 minutes **STAND** 15 minutes **BAKE** 9 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **6 Tbsp. salted butter**
- **⅓ cup evaporated milk**
- **¼ cup sugar**
- **2 Tbsp. honey**
- **¾ cup sliced almonds and/or chopped pistachios**
- **⅔ cup finely chopped mixed dried fruits, such as apricots, cranberries, or mixed candied fruits and peels**
- **¼ cup all-purpose flour**
- **Chocolate Bottoms (optional)**

1. In a medium saucepan combine butter, evaporated milk, sugar, and honey. Bring to a full rolling boil over medium-high, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Stir in almonds and fruits. Stir in flour. Let stand 15 minutes.

2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper. Drop batter by 1-Tbsp. portions at least 2½ inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Using the back of a spoon, spread the batter into 2½-inch circles.

3. Bake until evenly golden brown, 9 to 11 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Slide parchment paper with cookies onto a wire rack. Cool completely on the parchment paper. If you like, follow the directions for Chocolate Bottoms *(right)*. **Makes 18 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *101 cal, 6 g fat (3g sat fat), 12 mg chol, 37 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 1 g fiber, 9 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE BOTTOMS

In small bowl microwave 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips (6 oz.) and 2 Tbsp. shortening until melted, 1 to 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Spread mixture onto bottoms of cookies. Place cookies, chocolate sides up, on a wire rack; let stand until set.

CHERRY WINKS,
p. 65

CHOCOLATE-ALMOND BONBONS

HANDS ON 1 hour 10 minutes
BAKE 6 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 1 **12-oz. pkg. semisweet chocolate chips (2 cups)**
- ¼ **cup salted butter**
- 1 **14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 **tsp. vanilla**
- 2 **cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 **8-oz. pkg. almond paste (made without syrup or glucose)**
- 1 **recipe Chocolate Glaze (optional)**
- **Sprinkles (optional)**
- **Miniature paper bake cups (optional)**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a medium saucepan combine chocolate chips and butter. Cook and stir over low until melted and smooth, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat. Whisk in sweetened condensed milk and vanilla. Gradually stir in flour.
2. For each bonbon, shape a 2-tsp. portion of dough around a ½-tsp. portion of almond paste to fully enclose. Place 1 to 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until soft and shiny, 6 to 8 minutes (do not overbake). Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. If you like, brush Chocolate Glaze over bonbons. Place on wire rack set over waxed paper. Decorate with sprinkles. Let stand until set, about 15 minutes. If you like, serve in bake cups. **Makes 56 bonbons.**
PER BONBON *94 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 5 mg chol, 17 mg sodium, 13 g carb, 1 g fiber, 9 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE GLAZE

In a small bowl stir together 1 cup powdered sugar, 2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder, and ½ tsp. vanilla. Stir in enough milk (6 to 8 tsp.) to make brushable glaze consistency.

Tips for Success

GOLDEN SYRUP

Made from sugar cane, golden syrup is a popular ingredient in England. Stateside it is available in specialty stores, large supermarkets, and online. Dark corn syrup, which is derived from corn, can be used in a pinch but won't yield the same crisp texture.

SILICONE BAKING MAT

For best results, use a reusable silicone baking mat. These oven-safe mats—available at cooking stores and online—have superior stick resistance for easy removal. In a pinch you can use a new piece of greased foil for each batch instead.

BRANDY SNAPS

HANDS ON 10 minutes **BAKE** 9 minutes per batch at 350°F **COOL** 15 minutes

- **¾ cup all-purpose flour**
- **½ tsp. ground ginger**
- **¾ cup sugar**
- **½ cup salted butter**
- **⅓ cup golden syrup (tip, *above right*)**
- **1 Tbsp. brandy**
- **1 recipe Vanilla Whipped Cream**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a cookie sheet with a silicone baking mat (tip, *above right*).
2. In a small bowl stir together flour and ginger. In a medium saucepan heat and stir sugar, butter, and syrup over low until butter melts; remove from heat. Whisk in flour mixture until combined. Stir in brandy.
3. Drop batter in 1-Tbsp. portions 5 to 6 inches apart on the prepared cookie sheet. (Bake only three cookies at a time.)
4. Bake until bubbly and golden brown, 9 to 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheet 30 seconds to 1 minute. Lightly grease three ¾-inch-wide whisk or wooden spoon handles. Quickly invert cookies and baking mat onto another cookie sheet. Working quickly, carefully peel cookies off of mat. Wrap one cookie around each prepared handle. Set on a wire rack. When each cookie is set and firm, about 30 seconds, remove from handle. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. For each batch, use a cool baking sheet and wipe silicone mat clean.
5. Just before serving, fill a piping bag fitted with a large star tip with Vanilla Whipped Cream. Pipe into cooled cookies. Serve immediately (or store unfilled cookies up to 3 hours at room temperature). **Makes 18 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *218 cal, 16 g fat (10 g sat fat), 47 mg chol, 69 mg sodium, 19 g carb, 0 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

VANILLA WHIPPED CREAM

In a large bowl beat 2¼ cups cold heavy cream with a mixer on medium until soft peaks form. Beat in ¼ cup sugar and 1 tsp. vanilla bean paste; continue beating until medium-stiff peaks form (do not overbeat).

A RICH HISTORY

As the story goes, Joe Froggers were created in a Massachusetts tavern by owner Lucretia Brown in the early 1800s, the name being a play on that of her husband and co-owner, Joe Brown. Legend suggests the "frogger" part of the name was perhaps inspired by the frogs in the mill pond near the tavern. This recipe first appeared in our publications in the 1975 *Better Homes and Gardens Heritage Cook Book*. When we recently retested it, all the tasters declared it to be the best molasses cookie recipe in our archives.

JOE FROGGERS

HANDS ON 20 minutes **BAKE** 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ¾ cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1½ tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. ground cloves
- ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. ground allspice
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 cup molasses
- 2 Tbsp. water
- 2 Tbsp. rum or milk
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 recipe Lemon Icing (optional)
- Colored sugar (optional)

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next seven ingredients (through salt). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in molasses, the water, and rum. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half.

2. On a lightly floured surface, roll one dough portion at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use 4-inch round cookie cutters to cut out, rerolling scraps as needed. Place cutouts 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.

3. Bake until set, 7 to 9 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. If you like, spread with Lemon Icing and sprinkle with colored sugar.

Makes 18 cookies.

PER COOKIE *268 cal, 8 g fat (5 g sat fat), 20 mg chol, 171 mg sodium, 45 g carb, 1 g fiber, 24 g sugars, 3 g pro.*

LEMON ICING

In a small bowl combine 2 cups powdered sugar, 2 Tbsp. softened salted butter, and ½ tsp. lemon zest. Stir in 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice. Stir in 1 to 2 Tbsp. milk until icing is smooth and drizzling consistency.

Scoop and Drop

Prepare dough as directed through Step 1, except wrap and chill until easy to handle, at least 1 hour. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Drop dough by 3-Tbsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Dip bottom of a glass in sugar. Flatten each dough portion to ½-inch thickness with glass. Bake until edges are firm, bottoms are lightly browned, and centers are still moist, about 9 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Makes 24 cookies.

FIG COOKIES

PICTURED ON *P. 59* // **HANDS ON** 45 minutes **CHILL** 3 hours
BAKE 10 minutes at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 recipe Fig Filling
- Powdered sugar (optional)

1. In a medium bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar, brown sugar, and baking soda. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, about 3 hours.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a large cookie sheet with parchment paper. On a well-floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to a 10x8-inch rectangle. Cut each rectangle into two 10x4-inch strips. Spread one-fourth of the Fig Filling down center of each strip. Lift and fold long edges of dough over filling, using a bench scraper if needed; seal edges. Place filled strips, seam sides down, on prepared cookie sheet.
3. Bake until light brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Immediately cut strips diagonally into 1-inch slices. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. If you like, sift with powdered sugar. **Makes 36 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *125 cal, 4 g fat (2 g sat fat), 12 mg chol, 35 mg sodium, 23 g carb, 1 g fiber, 16 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

FIG FILLING

In a small saucepan combine 1 cup dried figs, stems removed, chopped; ⅔ cup raisins, finely chopped; ½ cup orange juice; ⅓ cup chopped candied fruits and peels; 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar; 1 tsp. orange zest; and ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon. Bring just to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until fruit is soft and mixture is thick, 5 to 8 minutes. Stir in ½ cup finely chopped slivered almonds. Cool to room temperature.

CHERRY WINKS

PICTURED ON *P. 61* // **HANDS ON** 50 minutes **BAKE** 7 minutes per batch at 400°F

- ½ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup shortening
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- 1 Tbsp. orange juice, lemon juice, or milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup chopped raisins
- ½ cup chopped walnuts, toasted (tip, *p. 92*)
- 1½ tsp. orange or lemon zest
- 2 cups cornflakes or wheat flakes cereal, crushed
- 13 to 14 candied cherries, halved

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat sugar, shortening, baking powder, and salt with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Beat in egg, orange juice, and vanilla, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in flour. Stir in raisins, walnuts, and orange zest.
2. Place cereal in a bowl. Drop dough by 1-Tbsp. portions into crushed cereal. Toss lightly to shape dough portions into balls and coat with flakes. Place 1½ to 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Press a candied cherry half, cut side down, into center of each dough ball. Bake until bottoms are lightly browned, 7 to 10 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 26 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *97 cal, 4 g fat (1 g sat fat), 7 mg chol, 53 mg sodium, 14 g carb, 1 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Cutouts

Pull out your rolling pins and cookies cutters for our best standout cutouts.

LIME ZINGERS, *P. 68*

CHOCOLATE-PISTACHIO
TREES, P. 68

IN A 1994 COOKIE CONTEST, THESE LIME COOKIES MADE AN IMPRESSION. "WE HAD TRIED SO MANY SWEET COOKIES, THEN ALONG CAME THESE LITTLE CUTOUTS BURSTING WITH LIVELY CITRUS KICK," SAID A *BETTER HOMES & GARDENS* MAGAZINE EDITOR AT THE TIME.

CHOCOLATE-PISTACHIO TREES

PICTURED ON *P. 67*
HANDS ON 45 minutes
COOL 15 minutes **CHILL** 30 minutes
BAKE 9 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 1 cup salted butter
- ⅔ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¾ cup finely chopped pistachio nuts
- ¾ cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 Tbsp. shortening
- ½ cup ground pistachio nuts

1. In a medium saucepan heat and stir butter and brown sugar over low until butter is melted. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Cool 15 minutes. Stir in egg, flour, and cocoa powder until combined. Stir in the ¾ cup pistachio nuts. Divide dough in half. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use a 2-inch tree-shape cookie cutter to cut out shapes. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until edges are firm, 9 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. In a small bowl microwave chocolate chips and shortening until melted, 45 to 60 seconds, stirring every 30 seconds. Dip one edge of each cookie into chocolate mixture; sprinkle ground pistachio nuts over chocolate. Let stand until set. **Makes 48 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *105 cal, 7 g fat (3 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 44 mg sodium, 9 g carb, 1 g fiber, 3 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

LIME ZINGERS

PICTURED ON *P. 66*
HANDS ON 40 minutes
BAKE 8 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 3 to 4 limes
- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup finely chopped Brazil nuts or hazelnuts
- 1 recipe Lime Frosting

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Remove 2 tsp. zest and squeeze 5 Tbsp. juice from limes. Reserve 1 Tbsp. juice for frosting.
2. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar. Beat until combined. Beat in lime zest, ¼ cup of the juice, and the vanilla. Beat in flour. Stir in nuts. Divide dough in half.
3. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use 1- to 2-inch cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps. Place 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
4. Bake until edges are light brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
5. Spread Lime Frosting on cooled cookies. If you like, sprinkle with additional lime zest. **Makes 42 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *110 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 14 mg chol, 44 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 0 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

LIME FROSTING

In a medium bowl beat 4 oz. softened cream cheese (, 1 cup powdered sugar, 1 Tbsp. reserved lime juice, and 1 tsp. vanilla with a mixer on medium until smooth.

BROWNED BUTTER COOKIES

HANDS ON 25 minutes **CHILL** 45 minutes
BAKE 5 minutes per batch at 425°F

- **1 cup salted butter**
- **2½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **¼ cup packed brown sugar**
- **¼ tsp. baking powder**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **2 egg yolks, lightly beaten**
- **¼ to ⅓ cup milk, divided**
- **1 recipe Browned Butter Icing**

1. In a small heavy saucepan melt butter over medium. Continue heating, stirring occasionally, until butter turns a rich golden brown, about 6 minutes. Remove from heat; pour into a small bowl. Refrigerate, stirring occasionally, until firm, 45 to 60 minutes.
2. In a large bowl combine next four ingredients (through salt). Scoop solid browned butter from bowl into the flour mixture. Use a pastry blender to cut browned butter into flour mixture until pieces are pea size.
3. Stir together egg yolks and 2 Tbsp. of the milk. Gradually stir into flour mixture. Add additional milk, 1 Tbsp. at a time, until all the flour mixture is just moistened. Gently knead dough just until a ball forms.
4. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll one portion of dough at a time to ¼-inch thickness. Use 1½- to 2½-inch floured cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps. Place cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
5. Bake until edges are firm and bottoms are light brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Decorate with Browned Butter Icing. **Makes 32 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *97 cal, 6 g fat (4 g sat fat), 27 mg chol, 70 mg sodium, 9 g carb, 0 g fiber, 2 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

BROWNED BUTTER ICING

In a small saucepan melt ⅓ cup salted butter over low. Continue cooking, stirring often, until butter turns a delicate light brown, 7 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat. In a medium bowl combine 1½ cups powdered sugar, 2 Tbsp. maple syrup, and ½ tsp. vanilla. Add the browned butter. Whisk until smooth. Gradually add enough bourbon, about 2 to 3 Tbsp., to reach drizzling consistency.

STUFFED AND FILLED

We love cookies in every shape and size, but there's something extra special about those with a scrumptious surprise inside. These tassies, sandwiches, and thumbprints prove the best part is tucked in the middle!

FRENCH PISTACHIO BUTTERCREAMS, *P. 75*

PEPPERMINT SANDWICH CREMES

HANDS ON 30 minutes
FREEZE 2 hours
BAKE 10 minutes per batch at 350°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. peppermint extract
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 recipe Peppermint Filling
- Colored sugar or sprinkles

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar, baking soda, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, vanilla, and peppermint extract. Beat in flour.
2. Divide dough into four portions. Shape each portion into an 8-inch log. Wrap and freeze until firm, 2 to 3 hours.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Use a sharp knife to cut logs into ⅜-inch slices. Place 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake just until firm, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. Spread Peppermint Filling on bottoms of half of the cookies. Top with remaining cookies, bottom sides down. Roll edges in colored sugar. **Makes 35 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *152 cal, 5 g fat (3 g sat fat), 18 mg chol, 69 mg sodium, 26 g carb, 0 g fiber, 19 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

PEPPERMINT FILLING

In a large bowl beat 3 oz. softened cream cheese and ¼ cup softened salted butter with a mixer on medium until smooth. Beat in 1 tsp. vanilla and ½ tsp. peppermint extract. Gradually beat in 3 cups powdered sugar. If needed, beat in milk, 1 tsp. at a time, to make spreading consistency.

PEPPERMINT SANDWICH CREMES

PECAN TASSIES

HANDS ON 30 minutes **BAKE** 25 minutes at 325°F

- ½ **cup salted butter, softened**
- 3 **oz. cream cheese, softened**
- 1 **cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 **egg, lightly beaten**
- ¾ **cup packed brown sugar**
- 1 **Tbsp. salted butter, melted**
- ⅔ **cup coarsely chopped pecans**

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. For pastry, in a medium bowl beat the ½ cup softened butter and the cream cheese with a mixer on medium until combined. Stir in flour. Shape dough into 24 balls. Press each ball into the bottom and up the sides of 24 ungreased 1¾-inch muffin cups.

2. For pecan filling, in a bowl stir together egg, brown sugar, and the 1 Tbsp. melted butter. Stir in pecans. Add a small spoonful of filling to each pastry-lined cup. Bake until pastry is light brown and filling is puffed, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool tassies in pan on a wire rack 5 minutes. Remove from pan; cool completely on wire rack. **Makes 24 tassies.**

PER TASSIE *119 cal, 8 g fat (4 g sat fat), 24 mg chol, 47 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 0 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Fudgy Brownie Tassies

Prepare as directed, except omit pecan filling. In a bowl microwave ½ cup semisweet chocolate chips and 2 Tbsp. salted butter until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth, about 30 seconds. Stir in ⅓ cup sugar, 1 beaten egg, and 1 tsp. vanilla. If you like, place 1 walnut piece in each pastry-lined muffin cup. Spoon about 1 tsp. chocolate mixture into each cup. Bake until pastry is light brown and filling is puffed, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool as directed.

READERS AND FOOD EDITORS ALIKE RATE THIS 1981 COOKIE AMONG THEIR ALL-TIME FAVORITES.

BURIED CHERRY COOKIES

HANDS ON 30 minutes **BAKE** 10 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 1 10-oz. jar maraschino cherries
- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- 1½ tsp. vanilla
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips (no substitutes) (tip, *above right*)
- ½ cup canned sweetened condensed milk (no substitutes) (tip, *above right*)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Drain cherries, reserving juice. Pat cherries dry with paper towels. Halve any large cherries.
2. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in flour and cocoa powder.
3. Shape dough into 1-inch (2-tsp.) balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Press the back of a rounded ½-tsp. measuring spoon or your thumb into the center of each ball. Place a cherry in each center (you may have extra cherries).
4. For frosting, in a small saucepan combine chocolate chips and sweetened condensed milk. Cook and stir over low until chocolate melts. Stir in 4 tsp. reserved cherry juice. (Frosting should have a spreadable consistency.) Spoon or pipe 1 tsp. frosting over each cherry, spreading gently to cover cherry. (Gently rewarm the frosting on low as needed to maintain spreading consistency; do not overheat.)
5. Bake until edges are firm, about 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 36 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *113 cal, 5 g fat (3 g sat fat), 13 mg chol, 57 mg sodium, 18 g carb, 1 g fiber, 13 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

Blond Buried Cherry Cookies

Prepare as directed, except increase baking powder to ½ tsp. and omit baking soda. Substitute almond extract for the vanilla, omit the cocoa powder, and increase flour to 2 cups.

KEEP IT REAL

Do not substitute any other type of chocolate or use imitation chocolate chips for the semisweet chocolate chips. Use sweetened condensed milk only. Other types of milk or cream will not work.

BURIED CHERRY COOKIES

FRENCH PISTACHIO BUTTERCREAMS

PICTURED ON *P. 71*
HANDS ON 35 minutes
CHILL 1 hour 40 minutes
BAKE 7 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **1 cup salted butter, softened, divided**
- **1 cup powdered sugar, divided**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 egg**
- **1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **Granulated sugar**
- **1 tsp. brandy or milk**
- **1 cup semisweet and/or white chocolate pieces, melted**
- **½ cup chopped pistachio nuts**

1. In a large bowl beat ¾ cup of the butter, ½ cup of the powdered sugar, and the salt with a mixer on medium until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg. Beat in flour. Cover; chill until dough is easy to handle, about 1 hour.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Shape dough into ¾- to 1-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Dip the bottom of a glass in granulated sugar; flatten each ball to a 1½-inch circle. Bake until bottoms are lightly browned, 7 to 10 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool completely.
3. For filling, in a small bowl beat the remaining ½ cup powdered sugar and ¼ cup butter and the brandy with a mixer on medium until smooth.
4. Spread filling on bottoms of half of the cookies. Top with remaining cookies, bottom sides down. Chill until filling is set, about 30 minutes. Dip half of each sandwich in melted semisweet chocolate and/or melted white chocolate; roll coated edge in nuts. Chill until chocolate is set, about 10 minutes more. **Makes 20 sandwiches.**
PER SANDWICH *212 cal, 14 g fat (8 g sat fat), 34 mg chol, 129 mg sodium, 22 g carb, 1 g fiber, 13 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

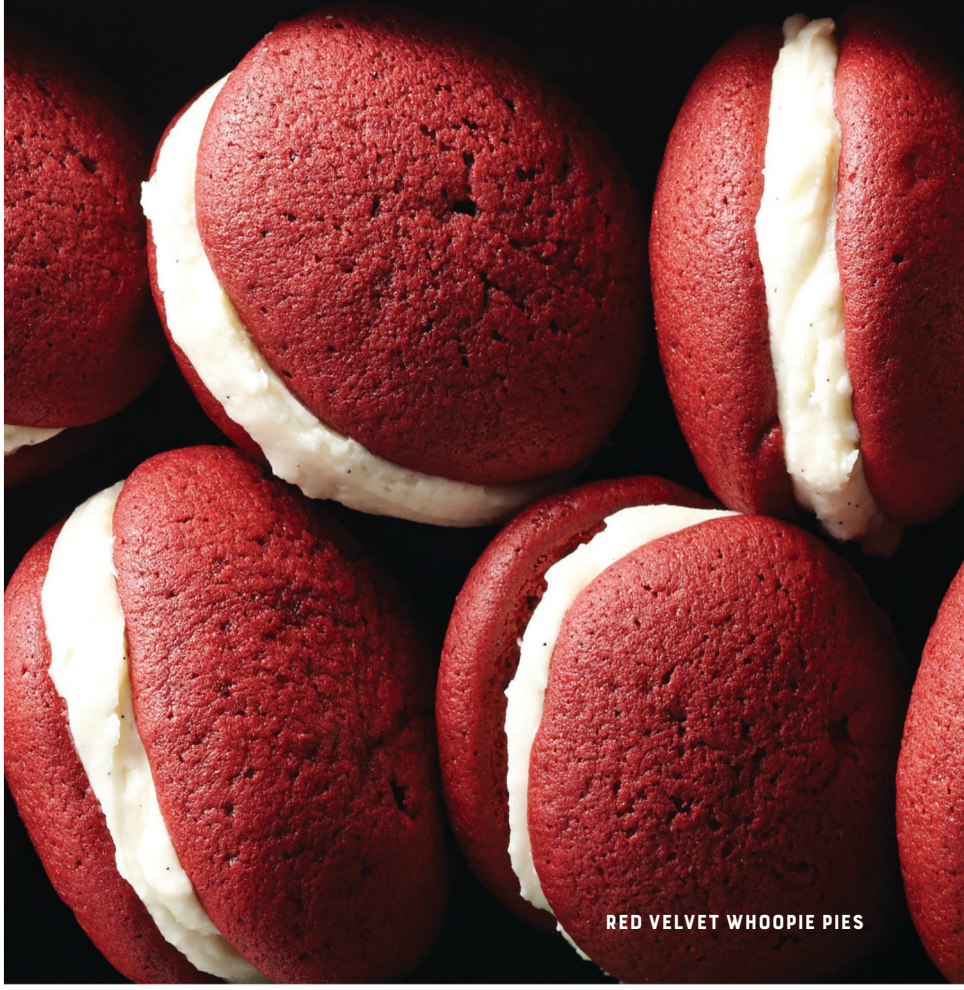
DOUBLE-ALMOND AND RASPBERRY BLOSSOMS

DOUBLE-ALMOND AND RASPBERRY BLOSSOMS

HANDS ON 35 minutes **CHILL** 30 minutes
BAKE 25 minutes at 325°F

- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar, divided**
- **½ cup ground slivered almonds, divided**
- **½ cup salted butter, chilled and cut up**
- **1 egg yolk, lightly beaten**
- **1 to 3 tsp. water**
- **¼ cup salted butter, softened**
- **3 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- **1 egg**
- **¼ tsp. orange zest**
- **1 Tbsp. orange juice**
- **¼ cup seedless raspberry preserves**
- **Crushed freeze-dried raspberries or powdered sugar (optional)**
- **Fresh raspberries (optional)**

1. In a medium bowl stir together flour, ¼ cup sugar, and ¼ cup of the ground almonds. Use a pastry blender to cut in ½ cup chilled butter until pieces are pea size. Stir together egg yolk and 1 tsp. water; gradually stir yolk mixture into flour mixture. If needed, add 1 to 2 tsp. additional water until dough clings together. Gently knead dough just until a ball forms. Wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, 30 to 60 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, for filling, in a small bowl beat ¼ cup softened butter, the cream cheese, and remaining 2 Tbsp. sugar with a mixer on medium until light and fluffy. Beat in egg, orange zest, and juice, scraping bowl as needed. Stir in the remaining ¼ cup ground almonds.
3. Preheat oven to 325°F. Grease twenty-four 1¾-inch muffin cups. Divide dough into 24 equal pieces; shape pieces into 1-inch balls. Place balls in prepared muffin cups. Press dough evenly onto the bottoms and up the sides of muffin cups.
4. Spoon about ½ tsp. preserves into each pastry-lined cup. Spoon filling over preserves. Bake until filling is set, 25 minutes. Cool in muffin cups on a wire rack 5 minutes. Remove from cups; cool completely on wire rack.
5. Just before serving, lightly sift crushed freeze-dried raspberries over tarts and top each with a berry (if using). **Makes 24 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *123 cal, 9 g fat (5 g sat fat), 34 mg chol, 60 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 0 g fiber, 6 g sugars, 2 g pro.*



RED VELVET WHOOPIE PIES

RED VELVET WHOOPIE PIES

HANDS ON 40 minutes **BAKE** 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **½ cup salted butter, softened**
- **1 cup packed brown sugar**
- **2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **½ tsp. baking soda**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **½ cup buttermilk**
- **1 1-oz. bottle (2 Tbsp.) red liquid food coloring**
- **1 recipe Marshmallow Filling**

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add brown sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and vanilla. Add flour and buttermilk alternately, beating on low after each addition just until combined. Stir in food coloring.
2. Drop dough by 2- to 3-tsp. portions 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are set, 7 to 9 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
3. Spread Marshmallow Filling on bottoms of half of the cookies. Top with remaining cookies, bottom sides down. Refrigerate in an airtight container up to 3 days. **Makes 40 sandwiches.**
PER SANDWICH *126 cal, 5 g fat (3 g sat fat), 18 mg chol, 79 mg sodium, 20 g carb, 0 g fiber, 14 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

MARSHMALLOW FILLING

Split a vanilla bean in half lengthwise; scrape out seeds. In a medium bowl beat **½** cup softened salted butter, one 8-oz. pkg. softened cream cheese, and vanilla seeds with a mixer on medium until smooth. Fold in one 13-oz. jar marshmallow creme.

CHOCOLATE-CARAMEL DELIGHTS

HANDS ON 30 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour
BAKE 10 minutes per batch at 350°F
STAND 30 minutes

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ⅔ cup sugar
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 egg, separated
- 2 Tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 16 vanilla caramels, unwrapped
- 3 Tbsp. heavy cream
- 1¼ cups finely chopped pecans
- ½ cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 tsp. shortening

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Beat in sugar and salt until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg yolk, milk, and vanilla. Beat in flour and cocoa. Cover and chill until dough is easy to handle, 1 to 2 hours.
2. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan heat and stir caramels and cream over low until melted and smooth.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll balls in egg white, then in pecans to coat. Place 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. Press your thumb into the center of each ball.
4. Bake until edges are firm, about 10 minutes. If the cookie centers have puffed up during baking, press again with the back of a small spoon. Immediately fill cookie centers with the melted caramel mixture. (If necessary, reheat caramel mixture to keep it spoonable.) Transfer cookies to a wire rack; cool completely.
5. In a small bowl microwave chocolate chips and shortening until melted and smooth, about 30 seconds. Cool slightly. Transfer to a resealable plastic bag; cut a small hole in one corner of the bag. Drizzle chocolate mixture over cookies. Let stand until chocolate is set, 30 minutes. **Makes 36 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *115 cal, 7 g fat (3 g sat fat), 13 mg chol, 50 mg sodium, 12 g carb, 1 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

ISCHL TARTS

HANDS ON 45 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour 45 minutes
BAKE 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter
- 1 cup powdered sugar, divided
- 2 egg yolks, divided
- 2 tsp. vanilla, divided
- ¼ tsp. salt, divided
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ⅛ tsp. ground cloves
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour, divided
- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup seedless red raspberry and/or apricot preserves

1. For spice dough, in a small saucepan cook ½ cup butter over medium until light brown, about 12 minutes. Pour into a medium bowl; chill just until firm, about 45 minutes. Beat chilled browned butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Beat in ½ cup of the powdered sugar, one of the egg yolks, 1 tsp. of the vanilla, ⅛ tsp. of the salt, the cinnamon, and cloves until fluffy, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in 1 cup of the flour.
2. For plain dough, in another medium bowl beat the ½ cup softened butter with mixer on medium 30 seconds. Beat in the remaining ½ cup powdered sugar, 1 egg yolk, 1 tsp. vanilla, and ⅛ tsp. salt until fluffy, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in the remaining 1¼ cups flour. Cover and chill both doughs until easy to handle, about 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll spice dough to ⅛-inch thickness. Use 2½- to 3-inch fluted cookie cutters to cut out shapes, rerolling scraps as needed. Repeat with plain dough to make matching shapes. Use a smaller cookie cutter to cut out desired shape(s) in plain dough cutouts (if you like, reroll center cutouts). Leave spice cutouts whole. Place all cutouts 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.
4. Bake until edges are light brown, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
5. Spread preserves on bottoms of spice cookies. Top with plain cookies, bottom sides down. If you like, sift lightly with additional powdered sugar. **Makes 18 sandwiches.**

PER SANDWICH *207 cal, 11 g fat (7 g sat fat), 48 mg chol, 127 mg sodium, 25 g carb, 1 g fiber, 11 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

"It's grand-to-eat gifts from you and your kitchen—they cost little, taste so good, and are swell fun to make."

—Food editor Myrna Johnston, *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine, December 1940

Shaped Sweets

Shaped cookies are created by ... you guessed it, shaping the dough! Rolling dough into balls or squeezing it from a piping bag are just two techniques to give holiday treats fun form and personality. (Pssst! Santa's new favorite is waiting on *p. 87*.)

VANILLA BEAN PILLOWS, *P. 88*

SYMBOLIC OF A YULE LOG ON A BLAZING FIRE HEARTH, THESE SPICED FROSTED COOKIES ADD TO THE WARMTH OF THE SEASON.
YULE LOGS, P. 84

CANDY CANES

HANDS ON 30 minutes **BAKE** 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 egg
- ½ tsp. vanilla
- ½ tsp. peppermint extract
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. red gel or paste food coloring
- Coarse sugar

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Beat in powdered sugar until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in egg, vanilla, peppermint extract, and salt. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. Stir or knead food coloring into one half.

2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. For each cookie, on a lightly floured surface shape 2 tsp. plain dough into a 4-inch rope. Repeat with 2 tsp. red dough. Place ropes side by side and twist together. Pinch ends to seal. Form twisted ropes into canes 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Sprinkle with coarse sugar.

3. Bake until bottoms and edges are lightly browned and cookies are puffed, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 33 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *108 cal, 6 g fat (4 g sat fat), 20 mg chol, 55 mg sodium, 12 g carb, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

ORANGE AND MACADAMIA NUT COOKIES

HANDS ON 45 minutes
BAKE 12 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 cups powdered sugar**
- **1 cup cornstarch**
- **2 cups cold salted butter, cubed**
- **1 cup chopped macadamia nuts or toasted walnuts**
- **2 egg yolks**
- **1 Tbsp. orange zest**
- **5 to 7 Tbsp. orange juice**
- **Granulated sugar**
- **1 recipe Orange Frosting**
- **Finely chopped macadamia nuts, toasted (optional)**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl combine flour, powdered sugar, and cornstarch. Use a pastry blender to cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the 1 cup nuts.
2. In a small bowl combine egg yolks, orange zest, and 5 Tbsp. orange juice. Add to flour mixture, stirring until moistened. If needed, add enough of the remaining 2 Tbsp. orange juice to moisten.
3. On a lightly floured surface gently knead dough until it forms a ball. Shape into 1¼-inch (1-Tbsp.) balls. Roll each ball in granulated sugar to coat. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Flatten each ball with the bottom of a glass to ¼-inch thickness.
4. Bake until edges begin to brown, about 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
5. Spread Orange Frosting on cookies. If you like, sprinkle with finely chopped macadamia nuts. **Makes 80 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *131 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 19 mg chol, 43 mg sodium, 17 g carb, 0 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

ORANGE FROSTING

In a large bowl beat 6 Tbsp. softened salted butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add 4 cups powdered sugar and 2 tsp. orange zest. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Add 4 to 6 Tbsp. orange juice to reach spreading consistency.

Special Ingredient

What's the secret to getting these buttery, nut-studded sweets to melt in your mouth? It's the 1 cup cornstarch that gives them that irresistible texture.

SNAPPER COOKIES

SNAPPER COOKIES

HANDS ON 30 minutes **BAKE** 9 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ¾ cup salted butter, softened
- ¾ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups small pecan halves
- ¾ cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 tsp. shortening
- Flaky sea salt (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add brown sugar; beat until fluffy, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in flour.
2. Shape dough into ¾-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Tuck 3 or 4 small pecan halves under each ball. Slightly flatten balls.
3. Bake until lightly browned on the bottoms, 9 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. In a small bowl microwave chocolate chips and shortening until melted, about 45 seconds, stirring every 30 seconds. Spoon chocolate mixture on top of cookies. Use a knife to swirl chocolate. If you like, sprinkle with flaky salt. Let stand until set. **Makes 42 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *116 cal, 8 g fat (3 g sat fat), 13 mg chol, 29 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 1 g fiber, 6 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

YULE LOGS

PICTURED ON *P. 81*
HANDS ON 20 minutes
CHILL 30 minutes
BAKE 12 minutes per batch at 350°F

- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg or ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- 1 egg
- 1 Tbsp. rum or 1 Tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 recipe Browned Butter Frosting
- Desired food coloring (optional)

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next four ingredients (through ginger). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, rum, and vanilla. Beat in flour. Divide dough into six portions. Wrap and chill until easy to handle, about 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface roll each dough portion into a ½-inch-thick rope (about 25 inches long). Cut ropes into 3-inch logs. Place logs 2 inches apart on the prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until lightly browned, 12 to 14 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Tint Browned Butter Frosting with food coloring, if you like. Spread or pipe frosting over cookies. If you like, dust lightly with additional freshly grated nutmeg. **Makes 50 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *108 cal, 5 g fat (3 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 37 mg sodium, 16 g carb, 0 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

BROWNED BUTTER FROSTING

In a small saucepan heat ¼ cup salted butter over low until melted. Continue heating, swirling occasionally, until butter turns a delicate brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; pour into a medium bowl. Add 2½ cups powdered sugar, 2 Tbsp. milk, and 1 tsp. vanilla. Beat with a mixer on low until combined. Beat on medium, adding additional milk (up to 1 Tbsp.) to make spreading consistency.

DANISH BUTTER COOKIES

HANDS ON 25 minutes
BAKE 16 minutes per batch at 325°F

- **1½ cups salted butter, softened**
- **¾ cup granulated sugar**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 egg, at room temperature**
- **1 egg yolk, at room temperature**
- **2 tsp. vanilla**
- **3 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 Tbsp. cornstarch**
- **Coarse sugar (optional)**

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, egg yolk, and vanilla. Beat in flour and cornstarch. Fit a large sturdy piping bag fitted with an Ateco #827 large open-star piping tip. Transfer dough to bag, filling no more than halfway at a time.
2. For each cookie, starting from the middle and working out, pipe dough into 1½-inch rosettes 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets, adding remaining dough to bag as needed. If you like, sprinkle lightly with coarse sugar or additional granulated sugar. Bake, turning sheets halfway through, until edges and bottoms are light brown, 16 to 18 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 36 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *128 cal, 8 g fat (5 g sat fat), 31 mg chol, 80 mg sodium, 13 g carb, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Tips for Success

SOFTER SIDE

Piping dough from a pastry/piping bag is more difficult than piping frosting. To ensure your dough is the right consistency, leave your butter on the counter until it is room temperature. Leave your eggs at room temperature for about 30 minutes.

IN THE BAG

It is important to use a large, sturdy piping bag for this dough. Fill the bag one-third to half full at a time so you can get a good grip on it for squeezing.

THE RIGHT TIP

For best results (and piping ease), fit your bag with an Ateco brand #827 open star piping tip. It is large enough to squeeze out the dough without difficulty. We found smaller open-star tips to be problematic for piping and didn't yield the desired look.

SIZE WISE

Try to keep cookies about 1½ inches in diameter when piping the dough. The cookies will spread somewhat during baking, so they will get a bit larger.

Viennese Fingers

Prepare dough as directed through Step 1. Pipe dough onto prepared cookie sheets in 3-inch sticks 1 inch apart. Bake and cool as directed. Microwave 8 oz. chopped semisweet chocolate until melted, 1½ to 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds. Dip the end of each cookie in chocolate to coat, letting excess drip off. If you like, sprinkle finely chopped nuts or candies over melted chocolate. Let stand on wire rack set over waxed paper until chocolate is firm, about 10 minutes. Makes 86 cookies.

As a FAVORITE FROM OUR ARCHIVES DATING TO THE EARLY 2000s, THESE JOLLY SANTA COOKIES HAVE HELPED CELEBRATE THE MAGICAL WHIMSY OF CHRISTMAS FOR DECADES. PLATE UP A FEW OF THE CUTE LITTLE FELLOWS WITH A GLASS OF MILK ON CHRISTMAS EVE FOR YOU-KNOW-WHO.

ROLY-POLY SANTA COOKIES

ROLY-POLY SANTA COOKIES

HANDS ON 40 minutes
BAKE 12 minutes per batch at 325°F

- 1 cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- Red paste or gel food coloring
- Miniature semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 recipe White Frosting
- Red cinnamon candies

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar; beat until creamy, 2 minutes. Beat in milk and vanilla. Beat in flour. Remove 1¼ cups of the dough. Stir food coloring into remaining dough.
2. Shape each Santa by making one ¾-inch (1½-tsp.) ball and four ¼-inch (⅛-tsp.) balls from the plain dough. From red dough, shape one 1-inch (1-Tbsp.) ball and five ½-inch (1-tsp.) balls. Press the 1-inch red ball on prepared cookie sheet until ½ inch thick. Attach plain ¾-inch ball for head and press until ½ inch thick. Attach four ½-inch red balls for arms and legs. Shape remaining ½-inch red ball into a hat; attach to head. Attach plain ¼-inch balls to ends of arms and legs for hands and feet. Add chocolate chips for eyes and buttons. Arrange Santas 2 inches apart on cookie sheets.
3. Bake until edges are lightly browned, about 12 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. Spoon White Frosting into a piping bag fitted with a small star tip. Pipe mustache, beard, and band and pompom on hat. For nose, attach a cinnamon candy. **Makes 14 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *370 cal, 21 g fat (10 g sat fat), 35 mg chol, 106 mg sodium, 44 g carb, 1 g fiber, 27 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

WHITE FROSTING

In a small bowl beat ½ cup shortening and ½ tsp. vanilla with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Gradually beat in 1⅓ cups powdered sugar. Add 1 Tbsp. milk. Gradually beat in additional 1 cup powdered sugar and enough milk (up to 4 tsp.) to make piping consistency.

CHOCOLATE-CANDIED WALNUT COOKIES

HANDS ON 20 minutes **CHILL** 30 minutes **BAKE** 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup shortening
- 1½ cups plus ⅓ cup sugar, divided
- 3 eggs
- 4 oz. unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 54 large walnut halves (about 5 oz.)

1. In a bowl beat shortening with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add the 1½ cups sugar and next five ingredients (through salt). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in flour. Cover and chill until dough is easy to handle, about 30 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl stir together the remaining ⅓ cup sugar and the egg white. Place walnut halves on waxed paper or parchment paper. Brush with egg white mixture.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Shape dough into 1-inch (1-Tbsp.) balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Place a brushed walnut half in the center of each ball, pressing lightly.
4. Bake until edges are set, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 54 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *91 cal, 4 g fat (1 g sat fat), 10 mg chol, 45 mg sodium, 11 g carb, 1 g fiber, 7 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

VANILLA BEAN PILLOWS

PICTURED ON *P. 80*
HANDS ON 30 minutes
BAKE 12 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **½ cup powdered sugar**
- **¼ cup cornstarch**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise**
- **1 cup cold salted butter, cubed**
- **¼ to ½ cup Vanilla Bean Sugar**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a food processor combine flour, powdered sugar, cornstarch, and salt. Cover and process until combined.
2. Using the tip of a sharp knife, scrape seeds from vanilla bean. Add vanilla seeds and butter to the flour mixture. Cover and pulse until mixture starts to cling, scraping bowl as needed. Gather mixture into a ball.
3. Shape dough into 1¼-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.
4. Bake just until edges start to brown, about 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool 5 minutes.
5. Place Vanilla Bean Sugar in a small bowl. While cookies are still warm, roll in vanilla sugar to coat. Cool completely on wire rack. **Makes 28 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *102 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 17 mg chol, 73 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

VANILLA BEAN SUGAR

Fill a clean 1-qt. jar with sugar (4 cups). Using a sharp paring knife, split one vanilla bean lengthwise. Insert both halves into sugar, making sure all of the bean is covered with sugar. Secure lid and store in a cool, dry place 2 weeks before using (to infuse flavor). (Leftover sugar will store indefinitely.)

SNOW-TOPPED CHOCOLATE MOUNTAINS

SNOW-TOPPED CHOCOLATE MOUNTAINS

HANDS ON 15 minutes **BAKE** 10 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **⅓ cup salted butter, softened**
- **⅔ cup powdered sugar**
- **2 oz. semisweet chocolate chips (⅓ cup), melted and cooled**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **1¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 Tbsp. milk**
- **24 Kisses milk chocolates**
- **1 recipe Fluffy Frosting**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Gradually beat in powdered sugar until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in melted chocolate and vanilla. Beat in flour and milk.
2. For each cookie, shape 1 Tbsp. dough into a ball; flatten dough between palms. Wrap dough around one chocolate candy to completely enclose. Place balls, pointed sides up, 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets.
3. Bake until bottoms are lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. Frost the peaks of the cookies with Fluffy Frosting and sift with additional powdered sugar, if you like. **Makes 24 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *120 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 8 mg chol, 25 mg sodium, 17 g carb, 0 g fiber, 11 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

FLUFFY FROSTING

In a small bowl beat 2 Tbsp. shortening or softened salted butter and ½ tsp. vanilla with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Gradually beat in ½ cup powdered sugar. Beat in 1 Tbsp. milk. Beat in enough additional powdered sugar (about ¼ cup) to make fluffy frosting consistency, 1 minute more.

CHOCOLATE CRINKLES

CHOCOLATE CRINKLES

HANDS ON 1 hour
BAKE 8 minutes per batch at 350°F

- **4 oz. unsweetened chocolate, chopped**
- **½ cup shortening**
- **¼ cup salted butter, cut up**
- **3 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **1¾ cups granulated sugar**
- **2 tsp. baking powder**
- **¼ tsp. baking soda**
- **¼ tsp. salt**
- **2 tsp. vanilla**
- **1⅕ cups all-purpose flour**
- **⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **¼ cup granulated sugar**
- **⅔ cup powdered sugar**

1. In a small bowl microwave chocolate, shortening, and butter until melted, about 1 minute, stirring every 30 seconds. Cool.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl combine next five ingredients (through salt). Stir in melted chocolate mixture and vanilla. Stir in flour and cocoa powder.
3. Shape dough into 1½-inch balls. Roll balls in the ¼ cup granulated sugar, then in the powdered sugar. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake just until edges are firm and cracks appear slightly moist, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 2 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 36 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *134 cal, 6 g fat (3 g sat fat), 19 mg chol, 69 mg sodium, 18 g carb, 1 g fiber, 13 g sugars, 2 g pro.*

Slice and Bake

Nostalgic icebox cookies are a throwback to a simpler time when a log of dough tucked into the icebox (aka early refrigerator) could be cut into slices and baked at a moment's notice—the quintessential make-ahead treat! (Plus biscotti for a bake-slice-bake change-up to that routine).

CHOCOLATE-GLAZED PEPPERMINT COOKIES

HANDS ON 45 minutes **CHILL** 1 hour 15 minutes
BAKE 6 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **1 cup salted butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **1½ tsp. baking powder**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **½ tsp. peppermint extract**
- **2½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 recipe Chocolate Coating**
- **Crushed peppermint candies (optional)**

1. In a large bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add next four ingredients (through salt). Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg, vanilla, and peppermint extract. Beat in flour.
2. Divide dough in half. Shape each portion into a 10-inch roll. Wrap each in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Chill until firm enough to slice, about 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Use a sharp knife to cut rolls into ¼-inch slices. Place slices 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are firm, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely.
4. Line trays with parchment paper. Dip cookies in Chocolate Coating; if you like, sprinkle with crushed peppermint candies. Place on prepared trays. Chill until set, about 15 minutes. **Makes 68 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *110 cal, 7 g fat (4 g sat fat), 10 mg chol, 51 mg sodium, 13 g carb, 1 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

CHOCOLATE COATING

In a medium saucepan combine 4 cups (two 12-oz. pkg.) semisweet chocolate chips and ¼ cup shortening. Cook and stir over low until chocolate melts.

HAZELNUT-BROWN SUGAR ICEBOX COOKIES

HANDS ON 30 minutes **CHILL** 2 hours
BAKE 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup shortening
- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- 1¼ cups packed brown sugar
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup hazelnuts or pecans, toasted (tip, *below right*) and ground
- ⅔ cup hazelnuts or pecans, toasted (tip, *below right*) and finely chopped and/or whole (optional)

1. In a large bowl beat shortening and butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add brown sugar, baking soda, and salt. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in flour and the ¾ cup ground nuts. Divide dough in half.
2. On pieces of waxed paper, shape each portion of dough into a 10-inch log. Lift and smooth the waxed paper to help shape the logs. If you like, roll logs in the ⅔ cup finely chopped nuts. Wrap each log in waxed paper. Chill until firm enough to slice, 2 to 24 hours.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Use a sharp knife to cut logs into ¼-inch slices. Place slices 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. If you like, top each slice with a whole hazelnut.
4. Bake until edges are firm, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 70 cookies.**
PER COOKIE *69 cal, 4 g fat (1 g sat fat), 6 mg chol, 30 mg sodium, 8 g carb, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

TOASTING HAZELNUTS

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place hazelnuts in a shallow baking pan. Bake until lightly browned and skins split, 10 to 12 minutes. Let hazelnuts stand until cool enough to handle, 5 to 10 minutes. Place nuts in a towel; rub to remove as much of the skins as possible. Grind or finely chop in a food processor, pulsing until desired size.

TOASTING OTHER NUTS

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place pecans, walnuts, almonds, or other nuts in a shallow baking pan. Bake until lightly browned and fragrant, 7 to 8 minutes. Let nuts stand until cool enough to handle, 5 to 10 minutes. Grind or finely chop in a food processor, pulsing until desired size.

SNICKERDOODLE PINWHEELS

HANDS ON 25 minutes **CHILL** 4 hours **BAKE** 8 minutes per batch at 375°F

- **1⅓ cups granulated sugar, divided**
- **1 Tbsp. ground cinnamon**
- **½ cup salted butter, softened**
- **3 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- **½ tsp. baking powder**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tsp. vanilla**
- **2⅔ cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 Tbsp. salted butter, melted**

1. In a small bowl combine ⅓ cup of the sugar and the cinnamon.

2. In a large bowl beat the ½ cup butter and the cream cheese with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add the remaining 1 cup sugar and baking powder. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg and vanilla. Beat in flour. Divide dough in half. If necessary, wrap and chill until dough is easy to handle, 1 hour.

3. Roll one portion of dough at a time between pieces of waxed paper to a 12x8-inch rectangle. Remove top sheets of waxed paper. Brush each rectangle with half of the melted butter. Sprinkle each with 2 Tbsp. of the sugar-cinnamon mixture. Beginning with one of the short sides, carefully roll up each dough rectangle, using the waxed paper to lift and guide the roll. Moisten edges; pinch to seal. Roll each in the remaining sugar-cinnamon mixture. Wrap in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Chill until firm enough to slice, 4 to 24 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Use a sharp knife to cut rolls into ¼-inch slices. Place slices 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets. Bake until edges are firm, 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets 1 minute. Transfer to a wire rack; cool completely. **Makes 60 cookies.**

PER COOKIE *59 cal, 2 g fat (1 g sat fat), 9 mg chol, 24 mg sodium, 9 g carb, 0 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

As early as December 1936, *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine editors suggested making cookie dough ahead and baking the cookies as needed. The magazine's cover featured food gift ideas, including festively bedecked homemade cookies, jams, and jellies.

LEMON-POPPY SEED MELTS

HANDS ON 20 minutes **CHILL** 4 hours **BAKE** 7 minutes per batch at 375°F

- ½ cup salted butter, softened
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. poppy seeds
- ⅛ tsp. baking soda
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 Tbsp. milk
- 2 tsp. lemon zest
- ½ tsp. vanilla
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup powdered sugar

1. In a medium bowl beat butter with a mixer on medium 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar, poppy seeds, and baking soda. Beat until combined, scraping bowl as needed. Beat in egg yolk, milk, zest, and vanilla. Beat in flour.

2. Divide dough in half. Shape each portion into a 9-inch roll. Wrap each in waxed paper. Chill 4 to 24 hours.

3. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. Use a sharp knife to cut rolls into ½-inch slices. Place slices 1 inch apart on prepared cookie sheets.

4. Bake until edges are firm and bottoms are lightly browned, 7 to 9 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack. While cookies are still warm, gently toss in powdered sugar until coated. Return to wire rack; cool completely. When cool, toss cookies again in the powdered sugar, adding more if needed.

Makes 36 cookies.

PER COOKIE *69 cal, 3 g fat (2 g sat fat), 12 mg chol, 25 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 0 g fiber, 6 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

WELL-ROUNDED

To keep your dough rolls from flattening in the fridge, slide the wrapped roll into a tall drinking glass placed on its side or lay it in a baguette pan. While you're slicing, rotate the roll frequently to avoid creating a flat side.

ALMOND BISCOTTI

HANDS ON 25 minutes
BAKE 25 minutes + 16 minutes per batch at 325°F **COOL** 15 minutes

2¾ cups all-purpose flour
1½ cups plus 1 Tbsp. sugar, divided
1½ tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
2 eggs
2 egg yolks
6 Tbsp. salted butter, melted
1½ cups coarsely chopped almonds

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl combine flour, 1½ cups sugar, the baking powder, and salt. Make a well in center of flour mixture. In a small bowl combine eggs, egg yolks, and butter. Add egg mixture to flour mixture. Stir until dough starts to form a ball. Stir in almonds (dough will be crumbly). Use your hands to knead dough until it comes together.
3. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Divide dough into three equal portions. Shape each portion into a 14-inch roll. Place two rolls about 3 inches apart on one of the prepared cookie sheets. Place remaining roll on remaining sheet; flatten rolls slightly to about 1½ inches wide. Sprinkle rolls with remaining 1 Tbsp. sugar.
4. Bake on separate oven racks, rotating sheets halfway through, until rolls are firm and light brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool on cookie sheets on wire racks 15 minutes.
5. Transfer rolls to a cutting board. Use a serrated knife to cut each roll diagonally into ½-inch slices. Place slices, cut sides down, on parchment-lined cookie sheets.
6. Bake 8 minutes. Turn slices; bake until lightly golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes more. Transfer to wire racks; cool completely (biscotti will continue to crisp as they cool).
Makes 60 cookies.
PER COOKIE *71 cal, 3 g fat (1 g sat fat), 15 mg chol, 63 mg sodium, 10 g carb, 0 g fiber, 5 g sugars, 1 g pro.*

Recipes

BARS
Brandied Fruit Bars 26
Cherry Kuchen Bars 50
Chocolate-Buttermilk Brownies 31
Hazelnut Sacher Bars 26
Lemon Bars + variation 29
Nanaimo Bars 28
Oatmeal Jam Bars + variation 30
Pan Lebkuchen.....51
Red Velvet Cheesecake Bars.....45
Scandinavian Almond Bars 32
Seven-Layer Bars 33

CUTOUTS
Bizcochito Stars 48
Browned Butter Cookies 69
Chocolate-Pistachio Cookies 68
Chocolate Watercolor Shortbread.....44
Classic Sugar Cookie Cutouts + variation ..21
Cream Cheese Sugar Cookies 22
Joe Froggers 64
Lime Zingers.....68
Peekaboo Sugar Cookies.....22
Plaid Sugar Cookie Cutouts.....44
Sesame Wafers 55
Shortbread + variations 12
Sour Cream Sugar Cookies 22

DROP
Brandy Snaps 63
Cherry Winks.....65
Chocolate Chip Cookies 7
Coconut Macaroons ...8
Cowboy Ranger Cookies 38
Florentines 60
Frosted Maple Drops ..37
Hermits 57
Lemon Drop Cookies 41
Oatmeal Cookies 6
Pumpkin-Pecan Cookies 41
Salty-Sweet Butterscotch Cookies 39
Triple Chocolate Cookies 36
White Chocolate-Raspberry Cookies ...37

FILLED
Brandy Snaps.....63
Buried Cherry Cookies 74
Chocolate-Almond Bonbons 62
Chocolate-Caramel Delights 78
Fig Cookies 65
Hamantaschen 49
Snow-Topped Chocolate Mountains 88

FROSTINGS & ICINGS
Buttercream Frosting ..23
Cream Cheese Frosting + variation 23
Powdered Sugar Icing + variation 23
Royal Icing 23

SANDWICHES
French Pistachio Buttercreams 75
Ischl Tarts 79
Peekaboo Sugar Cookies 22
Peppermint Sandwich Creams 72
Red Velvet Whoopie Pies 77
Sour Cream Sugar Cookies 22

SHAPED
Candy Canes 82
Chocolate-Candied Walnut Cookies 87
Chocolate Crinkles 89
Danish Butter Cookies + variation 85
Eggnog Kringla 51
Giant Ginger Cookies 9
Greek Honey-Walnut Balls 53
Peanut Butter Blossoms 7
Peanut Butter Cookies..... 10
Old-Fashioned Sugar Cookies 15
Orange and Macadamia Nut Cookies 83
Sandies + variation 11
Snapper Cookies 84
Snow-Topped Chocolate Mountains 88
Speculaas 52
Spritz 12
Roly-Poly Santa Cookies 87
Vanilla Bean Pillows 88
Yule Logs 84

SLICED
Almond Biscotti 95
Chocolate-Glazed Peppermint Cookies 91
Hazelnut-Brown Sugar Icebox Cookies 92
Lemon-Poppy Seed Melts.....94
Pfeffernuesse 58
Red Plaid Cookies.....45
Santa's Whiskers 56
Snickerdoodle Pinwheels 93

SUGAR
Almond Sugar Cookies 22
Classic Sugar Cookie Cutouts + variation 21
Copycat Crumbl Sugar Cookies 21
Cream Cheese Sugar Cookies 22
Old-Fashioned Sugar Cookies 15
Peekaboo Sugar Cookies 22
Plaid Sugar Cookie Cutouts..... 44
Sour Cream Sugar Cookies 22

TASSIES
Double-Almond and Raspberry Blossoms 77
Pecan Tassies 73

Cookie Storage

Below is general storage information for most cookies and bars. If storing for long periods or freezing, avoid filling or decorating cookies until you're ready to serve. When refrigeration is required for certain bars or cookies, specific storage information is given in individual recipes.

Multilayer Storage

Layer unfrosted bars and cookies, sturdy cookies, and cookies with firm-set icing between sheets of parchment paper in an airtight container. Store at room temperature or refrigerate (if directed in the recipe) up to 3 days or freeze up to 3 months. Thaw cookies, if frozen, and decorate as directed in recipe.

Single-Layer Storage

Place brownies, soft bars, and cookies with sticky toppings or frosting in a single layer in an airtight container. Store at room temperature or in the refrigerator (if directed in the recipe) up to 3 days or freeze up to 3 months.

Refrigerator Storage

Refrigerate cookies with these features:

- Caramel- and chocolate-base frostings and fillings
- Nougat or gooey fillings that benefit from firming
- Frostings and fillings containing sour cream, cream cheese, or butter
- Custard and cheesecake fillings

Skip the Freezer

Most cookies, bars, and cookie doughs freeze well, with the exception of these:

- Meringue, macaron, and macaroon batters
- Caramel toppings and fillings
- Brownie and bar batters
- Cookies or bars with custard-like fillings

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